DC
944.03
G82

Bc

DC 33.2 .G8 1921
Guérard, Albert Léon, 1880-1959.
French civilization from its origins to the close of the middle ages

FRENCH CIVILIZATION

FRENCH CIVILIZATION

FROM ITS ORIGINS TO THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

BY

ALBERT LÉON GUÉRARD

~~PRESENTED BY~~

> "The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

THE AMERICAN PRESS
..LIBRARY..

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
1921

.G8
1921

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

(All rights reserved.)

TO

CATHERINE ROBERTSON McCARTNEY

"Her children arise up, and call her Blessed."

NOTE

The purpose and method of the present work are similar to those of *French Civilization in the XIXth Century*, first published on the eve of the War. In both cases, the attempt has been made to sketch, in briefest form, the relations between the different manifestations of human activity, the sum-total of which constitute Civilization and Culture. In both cases, the immediate aim was to provide the proper background for the study of French Literature, whilst the needs of the general reader, who is interested in all aspects of French life, have been kept in mind. In both cases, the books are based on University courses, given at Stanford University from 1907 to 1913, at the Rice Institute after 1913, and repeated in part at the University of Chicago in 1916 and 1920. Strange to say, whilst America had, for many years, a number of Professorships of German Culture, the author was the first to hold a corresponding position with France as his special field. For this pioneering opportunity, his gratitude is due to the late Dr. John E. Matzke, to President E. O. Lovett, and to Professor Wm. A. Nitze.

Among the many problems which are tormenting the author's mind, one, a mere pin-prick, is still a source of constant annoyance: the transcription of proper names. He failed to discover in the practice of his authorities any coherent system, and he was unable to evolve one of his own. It seems that, in *general* history, the custom is to translate such names *in toto*, whilst *literary* historians prefer leaving them in their original form. Thus we say JOAN OF ARC, but JOHN J. ROUSSEAU would, to say the least, "sound strange to the English-speaking ear." When the DE before a surname clearly expresses the place of origin of the personage, as in JEHAN DE MEUN (Jehan Clopinel, of Meun-sur-Loire), the logical rendering *of* has been preferred. This is almost invariably the case with Mediæval names; but we have balked at ADAM OF THE HALL (Adam de la Halle), and in all modern instances the French *de* has been retained. The same difficulty exists with churches: we say, St. Peter's, St. Mark's, but Notre-Dame. If we have avoided confusion, we shall rest satisfied.

1914–1920! These two dates tell their own epic and sombre tale. Needless to say that in the intervening years the author has not been able, even if he had been willing, to immerse himself wholly in the Middle Ages. Few traces of the passions of the day will be found in these pages; but if any difference can be detected in the spirit of the two companion volumes, it will be found, we trust, in a clearer voicing of the *permanent* ideal in the name of which the Allies fought and won.

RICE INSTITUTE,
HOUSTON, TEXAS.

CONTENTS

PART I: THE ORIGINS

BOOK I: THE ELEMENTS OF FRENCH NATIONALITY

CHAPTER I. The Study of French Civilization. § 1. Civilization and Culture.—§ 2. Integral History.—§ 3. Philosophy of History.—§ 4. Is there a French Civilization? . . . . . pp. 17-28

CHAPTER II. The Land and the People. I. General Survey and Mountain Regions. § 1. France, a Completed Nation.—§ 2. France, an Epitome of Europe; Northern rather than Mediterranean.—§ 3. Natural Unity of France.—§ 4. The Voluntary Element in French Unity.—§ 5. Brittany.—§ 6. The Central Mountains.—§ 7. The Pyrenees.—§ 8. The Alps and Corsica.—§ 9. Jura and Vosges . . . . pp. 29-39

CHAPTER III. The Land and the People. II. Valleys and Plains. § 1. The Rhône and Saône Valley: Burgundy, Lyons, Provence, Languedoc.—§ 2. The Aquitanian Basin.—§ 3. The Parisian Basin: Seine and Middle Loire, Paris.—§ 4. Rhine, Meuse, and Scheldt: Alsace, Lorraine, Flanders.—§ 5. Geography and the Nature of French Patriotism . . . . pp. 40-50

CHAPTER IV. The Land and the People. III. Who and What are the French?—§ 1. Unity and Diversity: What is a National Type?—§ 2. Language.—§ 3. Ethnology.—§ 4. Anthropology.—§ 5. Psychology . . . . pp. 51-59

BOOK II: ANTIQUITY AND THE DARK AGES

CHAPTER I. Prehistoric Gaul. § 1. Importance of Pre-History in France.—§ 2. Eolithic and Lower Paleolithic Ages: The Neanderthal Race.—§ 3. Upper Paleolithic: The Crô-Magnon Race.—§ 4. Neolithic.—§ 5. Bronze and Iron Ages: Hallstatt, La Tène . . . . pp. 60-68

CHAPTER II. Pre-Roman Gaul—The Celts. § 1. Proto-History: Iberians, Ligurians, Phenicians and Greeks.—§ 2. The Celts: Race, Psychology.—§ 3. Celtic Migrations.—§ 4. The Celts in Gaul: Lack of Unity among the Cities, No Unity within the Cities.—§ 5. Religion of the Gauls.—§ 6. The Druids and their Culture.—§ 7. Civilization . pp. 69-81

CHAPTER III. ROMAN GAUL. I. CONQUEST AND ASSIMILATION. § 1. Conquest.—§ 2. Methods of Assimilation.—§ 3. Gallo-Roman Cities. —§ 4. Gallo-Roman Religion.—§ 5. Language and Culture: Education, Literature, Survival of Latin . . . . . . pp. 82-90

CHAPTER IV. ROMAN GAUL. II. DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN WORLD. § 1. Decline and Fall of the Roman Power in Gaul, 257-481.—§ 2. Causes of Decadence: Military.—§ 3. Causes of Decadence: Social. —§ 4. Causes of Decadence: Moral.—§ 5. The Heritage of Rome: Is France a Latin Nation? . . . . pp. 91-99

CHAPTER V. CHRISTIANITY IN ROMAN AND FRANKISH GAUL. § 1. Oriental Cults.—§ 2. Christianity Different from the other Oriental Religions.—§ 3. Christianity in Roman Gaul: Julian.—§ 4. Triumph of Christianity.—§ 5. The Church and the Barbarians.—§ 6. Did the Church save Ancient Culture?—§ 7. The Arians in Gaul: Alliance of the Church with the Franks.—§ 8. Corruption of the Frankish Church.—§ 9. Monasticism: The Benedictines.—§ 10. Conclusion: The Church and the World pp. 100-115

CHAPTER VI. THE FRANKS. § 1. The Great Invasions.—§ 2. Burgundians, Visigoths, and Franks in Gaul.—§ 3. Conquest of Gaul by the Merovingians: Clovis, Brunehaut.—§ 4. Decadence of the Merovingians; Rise of the Pepins.—§ 5. Charlemagne: his Reign and Legend.—§ 6. Decadence of the Carolingians.—§ 7. The Teutonic Invasions and the Feudal Aristocracy.—§ 8. The Teutonic Interpretation of French History.—§ 9. Net Result: the Dark Ages . . . . . pp. 116-131

PART II: THE MIDDLE AGES

BOOK I: THE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION. A SURVEY OF THE PERIOD. § 1. Indefiniteness of "France" in the Middle Ages.—§ 2. Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries: Crusades, First Conflicts with England.—§ 3. Heyday of Capetians under Philip-Augustus and Saint Louis.—§ 4. False Dawn of the Modern State: Philip the Fair.—§ 5. First Period of the Hundred Years' War.—§ 6. Second Period of the Hundred Years' War.—§ 7. Reconstruction: Louis XI and Charles the Bold.—§ 8. Chief Characteristics of the Middle Ages: (*a*) Christianity; (*b*) Feudalism; (*c*) The City, Commune, and Craft; (*d*) The Monarchy.—§ 9. The End of the Middle Ages.—§ 10. Complexity of Mediæval Civilization. pp. 135-149

CHAPTER II. THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE MIDDLE AGES.—§ 1. Spiritual Greatness of the Middle Ages.—§ 2. Heresies: The Waldensians, the Albigensians, the Inquisition.—§ 3. The Virgin and the Saints.—§ 4. Miracles, Relics, Pilgrimages.—§ 5. The Essentials: (*a*) The Sense of Sin, the Devil; (*b*) Mysticism.—§ 6. Growth of Dramatic Complexity pp. 150-160

CHAPTER III. THE CLERGY: BISHOPS, MONKS, AND POPES. § 1. The Secular Clergy under Feudal Influences.—§ 2. The Regular Clergy: Cluny, Citeaux, Bernard of Clairvaux.—§ 3. The Military Orders.—§ 4. The Friars.—§ 5. The Papacy.—§ 6. The Gallican Tendency pp. 161-169

CHAPTER IV. THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY. § 1. Power of the Church. Wealth: (*a*) Land; (*b*) Tithes.—Ecclesiastical Courts, Excommunication and Interdict.—§ 2. Influence of the Church: Charity, Peace and Truce of God, Knighthood.—§ 3. The Crusades: their Results.—§ 4. Anticlericalism . . . . pp. 170-178

CHAPTER V. CHRISTIAN CULTURE: ART. § 1. Romanesque Architecture.—§ 2. Gothic Architecture: its Principle.—§ 3. Evolution and Inspiration of Gothic Architecture.—§ 4. A Symphony of All the Arts pp. 179-186

CHAPTER VI. CHRISTIAN CULTURE: LITERATURE. § 1. Mediæval Latin.—§ 2. Sermons in Latin and in French.—§ 3. Lives of Saints: *Saint Alexis*, Miracles of Notre Dame.—§ 4. The Drama: Miracles, Mysteries . . . . pp. 187-196

CHAPTER VII. THE UNIVERSITIES AND SCHOLASTICISM. § 1. Parish, Cathedral, and Monastic Schools.—§ 2. Early Activities in Paris: Abelard.—§ 3. Evolution of the University of Paris.—§ 4. Life and Studies: Weakness of Mediæval Science.—§ 5. Mediæval Philosophy: Early Stages, Scholasticism, the "Universals," Aristotle, Golden Age of Scholasticism, Saint Thomas Aquinas . . . . . . pp. 197-208

BOOK II: LAY SOCIETY

CHAPTER I. THE FEUDAL REGIME. § 1. Anarchy and "Fist Law."—§ 2. Confusion between Property and Authority.—§ 3. Hierarchy of Landowners: Granting of Fiefs—Homage, Feudal Duties.—§ 4. Appeal and Contradictions of the Feudal System: Heredity *v.* Merit, "Real" *v.* "Personal" Relations.—Note I, Feudal and Manorial.—Note II, Romanists and Germanists . . . . . . pp. 209-217

CHAPTER II. THE LIFE OF THE FIGHTING CASTE. § 1. The Fighting Spirit: Christianity and Odin-Worship.—§ 2. Equestrian Origin of the Fighting Caste.—§ 3. Education, Knighthood.—§ 4. Castles: Pleasures: Tourneys, Hunting, The Fifteen Joys of Feudal Life—And a Few Others, Financial Difficulties.—§ 5. Culture of the Fighting Caste: Chronicle, Villehardouin, The Chanson de Geste: its Origins.—§ 6. The Christian and Feudal Epic: *Roland*, William of Orange, Feudal Wars.—§ 7. Deformation of the Epic: *The Pilgrimage of Charlemagne*, Popularity of the French Epic.—Note I, Form of the Epic.—Note II, Epics on Classical Subjects . . . . pp. 218-231

CHAPTER III. The Romance of Chivalry. § 1. Woman in Feudal Society.—§ 2. Southern Origin of Courtly Love.—§ 3. The Breton Cycle: The Lays, Marie of France, *Eliduc*, Tristan.—§ 4. The Arthurian Legends: Chrétien of Troyes, Launcelot, the Holy Grail.—§ 5. Aristocratic Literature: *Romance of the Rose*, Charles of Orleans, Joinville, Froissart.—§ 6. Aristocratic Life: The Castles at the End of the Middle Ages, Princely Patrons of Art . . . . . . pp. 232-244

CHAPTER IV. The Peasants. § 1. Condition of the Serfs.—§ 2. Mitigating Influences: The Church, Custom, Economic Forces, Emigration.—§ 3. Hardships and Rebellions: The White Hoods, the Pastoureaux, the Jacquerie.—§ 4. Waning of Serfhood: Rural Charters, Growth of Monarchical Sentiment . . . . pp. 245-252

CHAPTER V. Urban Civilization: The Communes. § 1. Origin of the Communes: Municipal Republics of Southern France, Insurrections in Northern France.—§ 2. The Commune in the Feudal World: Variety of the Charters, a Collective Barony, its Territory.—§ 3. Growth of an Urban Oligarchy, Communes and *Villes de Bourgeoisie* . pp. 253-258

CHAPTER VI. Urban Civilization: Commerce and Industry. The Guilds. § 1. Revival of Trade in the Eleventh Century: Influence of the East.—§ 2. Physical Handicaps: The Roads, Extortions and Brigandage.—§ 3. Financial Handicaps: Credit, Currency.—§ 4. Markets and Fairs: The King of Mercers, Jacques Cœur.—§ 5. The Guilds: The Brotherhood.—§ 6. The Craft.—§ 7. Apprentice, Journeyman, Master.—§ 8. Advantages of the Mediæval System; Spirit of Privilege.—§ 9. Compagnonnage; Freemasonry . . . . pp. 259-269

CHAPTER VII. Bourgeois Culture. § 1. Mediæval Cities: Fortified, Cramped, Picturesque, Unsanitary; the Richer Houses, Churches, Town Halls.—§ 2. The City Spirit: Pageants, Miracles, Mysteries, Comic Drama; Uncertain Boundaries of Bourgeois Culture.—§ 3. Fabliaux: *Isopet*, *Renart the Fox*.—§ 4. The *Romance of the Rose*, Second Part.—§ 5. Strength and Limitations of the Bourgeois Spirit . pp. 270-279

CHAPTER VIII. The Royal Power in its Relations with the Church and with Feudalism. § 1. Humble Beginnings: Progress not due to Individual Genius.—§ 2. Relations with the Church: Alliance, Without Subserviency, Gallicanism.—§ 3. Relations with Feudalism: Heredity restored, Extension of the Royal Domain.—§ 4. Administration of the Royal Domain: Sundry Methods of Aggrandizement.—§ 5. Evolution of the Army . . . . . . pp. 280-289

CHAPTER IX. The Royal Power: The Parliament: The States General: Culture. § 1. Evolution of the Curia Regis.—§ 2. The Parliament of Paris: A Legal Class, New Principles, Semi-Political Power of the Parliament.—§ 3. Finances: The States General under Philip the Fair.—§ 4. The States General and the Hundred Years' War.—§ 5. Comparison with England.—§ 6. The Monarchy and Culture: Not a Dominant Factor, Charles V, Alain Chartier, Commines.—§ 7. Officialdom the Steadying Factor in the Growth of the Capetian Monarchy pp. 290-301

CHAPTER X. Summary and Conclusion. § 1. Downfall of Mediæval Civilization.—§ 2. Survival of Mediævalism throughout the Classical

Age: The Revolution and the Romantic Reaction.—§ 3. The Middle Ages and Modern French Politics.—§ 4. Heterogeneity of the Middle Ages: The Three Elements, Endless Variety of Mediæval Christianity, Childishness of the Mediæval Mind.—§ 5. Appeal of the Middle Ages: Spiritual Greatness . . . . pp. 302-309

Bibliographical Note . . . . pp. 310-311

Appendix: Expansion of the Royal Domain during the Middle Ages p. 312

Index . . . . pp. 313-328

MAPS

FACING PAGE

Europe in 485, showing the Territories of the Goths 119

France before the Crusades 135

France during the Hundred Years' War . . . 143

The King's Library

PART I

THE ORIGINS

BOOK I

THE ELEMENTS OF FRENCH NATIONALITY

CHAPTER I

THE STUDY OF FRENCH CIVILIZATION

§ 1. Civilization and Culture.

Man's primary concern is now and was from the beginning his daily fight for existence. All other interests lose their urgency before the necessity of getting food and shelter. Hunger and cold were our first taskmasters, and the blessed desire to ward them off with the minimum of painful exertion remains our greatest teacher. In his struggle for life man made, unconsciously, two tremendous discoveries. The first was that he could work to better effect in collaboration with his fellow-man: he is by nature, and he has grown increasingly sociable. The permanent family, the tribe, the state, have become his necessary environment. The second discovery was that he need not be resigned to the brutish state of automatic adaptation which poets call the Earthly Paradise. He could, by taking thought, add to the gifts of nature. He could, within incredibly elastic limits, select his surroundings and even alter them. He could lengthen his arm with a club, borrow furs from creatures better provided than himself, create at will a small circle of summer warmth with a few sticks of burning wood. From the earliest stone implement to the wireless and the aeroplane, from the first concerted hunt to the elaborate insurance machinery of a modern state, we can trace the progress of this collective and masterful collaboration with nature. Society and useful arts are the essential instruments of civilization.

They are mere instruments: let that ever be borne in mind; crude enough at best, capable of tragic misapplication, and liable, through over-elaboration, to defeat their own purpose. A piano under skilled and soulless fingers; an engine of perverse ingenuity, balking in the hour of need; a conception of the state that makes war inevitable: these have made every one of us realize that progress in intricacy might mean no advance in civilization. And civilization itself is but a means; show us a shorter road to the Golden Age, and we shall gladly let civilization go to the dogs—who might spurn the gift.

Man cannot live without bread, but does not live by bread alone. In his age-long struggle for existence, he learned the habits of reflection and foresight. His intellectual curiosity, his imagination, his soul, were sharpened. They craved for satisfactions which science, philosophy, art, religion, attempted to provide. The sum of these nobler efforts is culture. The essential element in civilization is *usefulness*; in culture, *consciousness*. A man enjoying without a thought the benefits of society is but a barbarian in modern clothing. He may even have mastered a difficult technique, such as electrical engineering or classical philology, and yet be little more than a wonderful performing animal. The sage whose needs are few, whose practical knowledge is scant, but whose mind is capable of embracing a vast purpose, is cultured in the highest sense of the term. There is no inherent conflict between civilization and culture; they greatly assist and enhance each other; but they are not co-extensive. In its relation to the past culture is a reverent and curious probing of traditional lore. In the present it is the social sense in all its forms: from the lowest, mere politeness, to the higher, thirst for glory, and the highest, willingness to serve without reward. Looking towards the future, it should be a dynamic ideal. Unfortunately, it is liable to cherish the past too exclusively, as civilization is apt to dwell altogether upon the present. Religion is the crown of culture—the cosmic extension of this growing social consciousness, an effort to link our individual station in time and space with the universal Purpose. Whoever brings the words of life transcends civilization and fulfils the supreme mission of culture.

§ 2. INTEGRAL HISTORY.

If history is to give us a true picture of human life in ages past, it cannot therefore limit itself to so-called political events. The chief end of man never was to frame, uphold, or overthrow governments, still less to wage war and affix illustrious names to elaborate scraps of paper. These are accidents or epiphenomena. How superficial they are, what a discrepancy there may be between their permanent significance and the misery they entail upon a generation, is a lesson we are but slowly learning. No revolution, no conquest, will ever compare in importance with the discovery of fire, the invention of printing, or the revelation of Jesus. The battle of Sedan was undoubtedly a most dramatic event. Yet its consequences, the doom of one empire, the rise of another, were trifling, even for France and Germany, compared with those which attended the introduction of railroads.

Thus political history tells at best but a small part of the truth ; and even that part which lies within its narrow field it cannot thoroughly study without the assistance of other sciences. For it is a delusion to consider political events as forming an autonomous series. The evolution of legislation, for instance, could be told exclusively with parliamentary records. But the deeper causes of change will be found away from the council chambers—in the workshop, the school, the market-place. Whoever should attempt to explain the inception, the progress, and the outcome of the Great War in terms of diplomacy and strategy alone would be picking pebbles by the sea-shore. For into that mighty conflict the nations cast everything they possessed, wealth and blood, wit and soul.

The same holds true of all special histories, be their subject literature, art, or religion. None is complete in itself ; none can be fully explained without the others ; and each serves to explain the others in its turn. Literature in particular, even in its most technical aspects, cannot be divorced from the rest of civilization and culture. The formal character of the French classical tragedy is in harmony with the tremendous wigs and majestic colonnades of the period. The Romantic reform in French versification implied a whole revolution in French society.[1] If we are interested not merely in the instrument of literature, but in its message and in the sources of its inspiration, we cannot possibly limit ourselves to purely literary facts and documents. Authors are first of all human beings; they are influenced by the whole life of their community, and influence it in their turn. In every book the culture of the public it was meant for is consciously or not taken for granted, and that whether the writer share or combat the prejudices of his contemporaries. Every literary work is a dialogue between author and public, which we cannot understand if we ignore the "tacit interlocutor."

---

[1] This is expressed with great verve and some exaggeration in Victor Hugo's *Réponse à un Acte d'Accusation.*

If social history—within certain limits—lends valuable assistance to the study of literature, literature in its turn throws a flood of light upon social history. This is particularly true of the Middle Ages. Even the scholar who worked most lovingly and most acceptably in that field, Gaston Pâris, was careful not to maintain that the æsthetic or intellectual value of mediæval literature was very high. But it provides a wealth of fascinating documents. We need not mention the obvious instance of Memoirs and Chronicles: even the random note of a song may help us understand an institution. The old French epic would be almost unintelligible without some acquaintance with conditions in the feudal age; conversely, our knowledge of chivalry would be meagre and lifeless indeed without the poems which are filled with its spirit and describe its activities.[1] Literature is not merely a witness: it may be an active factor. Some books have helped to shape the destiny of a nation. Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme* was an event in the world of politics and religion, as well as in that of pure letters. The Napoleonic poems of Béranger and Victor Hugo fostered the imperial legend, and thus were partly responsible for the *coup d'état* of the 2nd December 1851. The German neurosis which ended in a *Götterdämmerung* was to a large extent a literary disease—a case of neglected romanticism which took a fatal turn. Wagner and Nietzsche, as well as Bismarck, should be brought before the bar of the world's conscience. If "Social Forces in

---

[1] M. Charles Seignobos, for instance, a political historian, quotes Léon Gautier's *Chevalerie*, which is mainly based on the study of the *Chansons de Geste*. M. Ch. V. Langlois used and published texts which, in America, would be handled solely by students of literature. M. Bédier's *Légendes Epiques* could not have been written without intimate knowledge of political, religious, and economic conditions.

Literature" are worth studying,[1] so are literary forces in social life. The interaction of these phenomena is evident.

We might repeat the same demonstration with respect to economics, art, or religion. These also are but threads woven into the endless tapestry of human experience. Draw them out, they are meaningless. The classical economists offer a striking example of the dangers which attend artificial isolation. They have evolved a Frankenstein monster —Homo Economicus—without traditions, devoid of love, pride, or pity, moved by the single desire of buying in the cheapest market: the progress of science was long hampered by that incubus, which is not yet fully exorcized. We hardly know what is religion in the abstract. If we did, it would be unprofitable knowledge. We do know that Christianity, in the Middle Ages, pervaded every form of life; we also know that it was then thoroughly mediæval. A statue, a doctrine, are epitomes of culture, just as much as a poem or an institution. True history must, therefore, be synthetic, or, to use a term of which modern French writers are inordinately fond, it must be "integral." It is this all-inclusive study which is called in Germany Kulturgeschichte, and in this country History of Civilization.[2]

Unfortunately, the conception of such a universal science is self-destructive. No scholar, even at the end of a long career, would be qualified to write "integral" history. Thus the work of the specialist, incomplete and even misleading though it may be, remains the indispensable basis of any synthesis. For the historian of civilization, original research into every part of the field, and exhaustive treatment of the whole, are out of the question. Yet his rôle is not simply that of a compiler. A mere juxtaposition of unrelated monographs would serve no purpose. What we need is a synthesis of their results. The field of the historian of civilization is not politics, art, literature, religion, science, industry, in themselves, but the study of their interaction. It includes only so much of each as will facilitate the comprehension of the rest. It provides the common background upon which scientist, artist, statesman, trader, warrior, prophet, will stand boldly out.

---

[1] Cf. Prof. Kuno Francke's *Social Forces in German Literature.*

[2] Obviously the German term is the more accurate; but so many atrocities have been committed in the name of culture—the numbing of souls in an atmosphere of icy pedantry, the maiming of bodies by raving Huns—that we prefer the looser, more commonplace, wholly innocuous word Civilization.

Thus the scope of our study is clearly defined. It borrows its materials from the specialist, works upon them, and returns the product to the specialist. It is the clearing-house of sundry sciences rather than a science in itself. For it will readily be seen that the interaction of different elements does not fully reveal the secret of their essence. "Race, environment, and time" do not tell the whole of literary history, in spite of Taine's autocratic assertions.[1] Lafontaine, born in Champagne, "bears fables as an apple-tree bears apples"; Racine, born within fifteen miles and in the same decade, wrote tragedies; and no other native of Champagne has rivalled them yet in either field. Social conditions under Louis XIV "explain" Pradon as well as Racine; they fail to explain why Racine is not Pradon. Much of our modern doubt and despair can be accounted for by historical causes; but in the nineteenth century we find faith by the side of doubt, and the great pessimist, Leconte de Lisle, is but an echo of Job and the Preacher. When textual criticism has prepared the ground; when history has "restored the atmosphere," as the phrase goes, in which a masterpiece was composed; when research has done its worst: then almost everything is accounted for, except what is really worth while, and the actual task of the student of literature begins. Historical knowledge removes artificial causes of misapprehension. It contributes next to nothing to the positive appreciation of a work of genius. It defines the literary problem: it does not solve it. The one key to literary treasures is not erudition but sympathy. In the same way criticism may clear away from religion all adventitious growths: it has nothing to do with the essential mystery of faith.

§ 3. Philosophy of History.

An ideal history of culture, of course, should be nothing else but a philosophy of history: how could it co-ordinate all special studies unless it transcended them all? True enough: we cannot help hankering after some intellectual alchemy whereby the unity of all knowledge will be made manifest. One after the other, men have come forward with their golden key. Now it was "diet" and "climate" that would explain Shakespeare and Buddha. Then we had the conception of "heroes" and "providential men,"[1] which raised the problem: Is a "great man" a product or a cause? Some people were satisfied with such question-begging phrases as "Democracy" and even "Progress." Others peddled their "economic interpretation of history," and even to-day there are sensible men who maintain that France and Germany fought for nothing but the iron-mines of Lorraine. Buckle had his Open Sesame, which was not widely different from Voltaire's: all progress is due to a victory of the critical mind over superstition. One of the most persistent of these magic formulæ is the theory of race, as expounded in our generation by H. S. Chamberlain.[2] A moment's reflection will convince us that none of these attempts is a genuine philosophy of history. Every one consists in taking one particular science as a centre, and, from that point of vantage, surveying the universe. Such hypotheses are frequently interesting: it is refreshing to see a familiar landscape in a new light. They may even be useful, if they call our attention upon neglected facts or unsuspected relations. A world-history from the tailor's point of view might have piquancy; and one by a competent neurologist would be of commanding value. But the result would be the philosophy of tailoring or of neurology, not the secret of man's evolution.

---

[1] Cf. Preface to *History of English Literature*; *Lafontaine and His Fables*.

The inadequacy of single causes cannot be better exemplified than by the obsolescence of the Christocentric conception. In the mediæval mind Jewish history was but the preparation of one supreme event, the coming of the Lord; even Pagan traditions were the prophetic shadows of the great Mystery. Nature herself was ransacked for allegories; numbers had their spiritual significance; all "took up the wondrous tale" and pointed to the same sacred truth. Christ came, and the world has lived ever since in the shadow of His cross.

If such a conception be mediæval, we need hardly say that there are legions of mediæval minds in the world to-day. But is there a single responsible historian willing to explain the course of civilization on the Christocentric hypothesis, as did Bossuet two centuries ago? The existence of Asiatic masses with a culture of their own, barely touched by Christianity, is sufficient to make the boldest hesitate. Christ came, and the world was not transformed. Nineteen centuries have passed, and Christianity is still on trial —it might be truer to say that, so far as national and economic life is concerned, it still has to be tried. The pious Emperor William II did not live on a much higher ethical plane than the Pagan Marcus-Aurelius. A spiritual revelation is a seed of life—the most precious thing in the world. But a seed is only one element in the growth of the plant. The agencies of earth, rain, and sun are indispensable. The stony ground, the thorns, the birds of heaven, are adverse factors which cannot be ignored. One seed out of many may grow into a tree, but its original uniqueness is an assumption which cannot be scientifically demonstrated. No doubt the philosophy of history is the probing of God's purpose. But we have no proof that He has communicated His plans even to Bossuet.

---

[1] Cf. Napoleon III, preface to *Life of Julius Cæsar.*

[2] Cf. his *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century.* A readable epitome of the same philosophy will be found in Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race.*

Far from attempting to illuminate history with a single idea, our endeavour would rather be to insist upon the complexity of human life and the overwhelming predominance of the unexplained.[1] Just as orthodox writers, in their prefaces, repudiate any thought which might savour of heresy, we desire to disclaim in advance any objective value for the theories which may be found in this book. As a rule, they are merely literary devices for the convenient grouping of facts; at best, working hypotheses, hired for the occasion, and which we are ready to discard if they fail to do their part.

Our justification for using them at all is that they belong to the nature of the subject: the history of culture is the list of the systems—political, literary, social, religious—whereby men have attempted to create a semblance of order in the chaos of their experience. In rare periods man's vision of his own world seems to be particularly distinct. Not only are his conceptions of society, art, religion, definite in themselves, but they are in harmony with one another. There is an unmistakable *style* pervading and correlating all forms of culture. Such are the ages of Pericles and Augustus, the first part of the thirteenth century, a score of years under Louis XIV. But soon the different elements grow at unequal rates, drift apart, get out of focus. The picture is once more blurred, puzzling, all the more fascinating, perhaps, until we begin to discern the faint outlines of the next synthetic view. History is mostly made up of transitional periods, " times out of joint " ; the true classical epochs, the moments of conscious equilibrium, are few. Nor should this be much regretted : the majesty of repose frequently turns into the stiffness of decrepitude. Formulation is inimical to progress. Feudalism did not find its complete expression until it had outlived its usefulness—such as that may have been. The theory of absolute monarchy was firmly established at last under Louis XIV : but it had already become a hindrance. Nationalism grew obscurely for many generations : it did not become dominant in men's consciousness until the nineteenth century, when the internationalism of science and industry was making it obsolete.[1] Classicism would make art a thrall to the dead. Theologies are ever weaving the shroud of faith. To formulate a system is but to reveal its inadequacy, and foster the rise of counter-systems. The task of science might be just this : to knock down one of these logical castles after another, not for the fun of the game, but in order to clear the path for the permanent, life-giving impulses, justice and love.

---

[1] Cf. the closing words of Seignobos's *Political History of Europe since 1814*: "For these three unforeseen facts no general cause can be discerned in the intellectual, economic, or political condition of the continent of Europe. It was three accidents that determined the political evolution of modern Europe."

§ 4. Is there a French Civilization ?

" There is a Chinese civilization, but there is no such thing as a French or a German civilization—for that reason their history cannot be written." Thus H. S. Chamberlain, in his *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century.*[2] We agree for once with the uncompromising apostle of racial exclusiveness in general and of Teutonism in particular. There were no " nations " in the modern sense of the word under

---

[1] " Le patriotisme entendu à la façon d'aujourd'hui est une mode qui en a pour cinquante ans. Dans un siècle, quand il aura ensanglanté l'Europe, on ne le comprendra pas plus que nous ne comprenons l'esprit purement dynastique du XVIIème et du XVIIIème siècle. Tout est vanité, excepté la science. L'art même commence à me paraître un peu vide."—E. Renan, *Lettre à Berthelot,* 10 Décembre 1878.

[2] London, 1911, ii, p. 232.

Roman rule, or for centuries after the irruption of the Barbarians. In the Middle Ages "France" and "Germany" were, like Burgundy, Lorraine, Aquitaine, terms of ever-changing connotation: the West formed a single feudal and Christian commonwealth. The royal domains slowly grew to nationhood during the classical period. But even then the main currents of thought ignored political frontiers. The Reformation, the Renaissance, the tendency to absolutism and classicism, the militant philosophy of enlightenment, the Revolution, the Romantic reaction, the new world of science, industry, and democracy—all these phenomena were European in their sweep. The newly acquired national consciousness comes with such a wave of noble enthusiasm that it may, for a brief spell, obliterate all other sentiments. But essential facts will reassert themselves, and the unity of European culture cannot be gainsaid.

Yet national consciousness, too, is a fact, albeit not so fundamental as we used to think. France may be a mere geographic expression, the French a racial hotch-potch, and their traditions only a share in the common hoard of Europe —still, we believe too heartily in "self-determination" to argue France and the French out of existence. An idea is a force. "They think, therefore they are." And if there is a France, there is a French civilization, which is nought but Western civilization refracted through the French *milieu*.[1]

That this French civilization deserves to be studied with thoroughness and sympathy is a point which, fortunately, no longer needs any demonstration. On the contrary, it requires an effort to remember that, a quarter of a century ago, the decadence of France was taken for granted, and the close kinship of all Saxondom was proudly insisted upon. Even before the war, we had come to realize that the French tradition was an essential part of our own, and not the least valuable. In the eleventh century French elements radically altered the Anglo-Saxon heritage, and modern England was the result. In the eighteenth century the French spirit, as well as the French arms, assisted in the emancipation of America.

Nor is this true of England and America alone. Men of many races can repeat:

> "Tout homme a deux pays, le sien et puis la France."

---

[1] By *milieu*, we mean the combination of race, habitat, and tradition.

The French do not claim for their culture any despotic supremacy; their sense of measure would tolerate no such absurdity. Other nations have brought priceless gifts. Italy led in the Renaissance, Germany in the Reformation, Spain in the epic of discovery. The industrial revolution started in England; there, also, originated many of the liberal ideas which are slowly conquering the world. Great was the share of Germany in the historical, philosophical, and scientific awakening of the nineteenth century. But no one thinks of denying the perennial appeal of French civilization. Its history is one of the longest in Europe. In contrast with those of Germany, Spain, Italy, it has suffered no complete and prolonged eclipse. England is too secure in her isolation. The national life of France, less fortunate, is a drama which arouses more deeply our wonder and our pity. Above all, French civilization is *central*, we might almost say metropolitan. The shores of France are washed by northern seas as well as by the Atlantic and the Mediterranean; all races are represented within her frontiers; in the same way, all strands of European culture meet in Paris. Repeatedly it was the task of France to co-ordinate scattered elements into an intelligible whole, to provide, not the substance, but the system, the type, the formula. Thus it was in France that were elaborated the codes of feudalism and chivalry, the codes of absolutism and classicism, the Rights of Man. It was no mere hazard, and no supremacy in wealth or arms, that made the speech of France the favourite vehicle of polite intercourse, in the age of faith and in the age of reason, at the time of Saint Louis and at the time of Frederick the Great. To ignore France is to court the stigma of provincialism. If culture consists mainly in the social consciousness, then the French are beyond peradventure its most complete exponents.

Lest this should seem too arrogant a claim, we must hasten to repeat that culture is not the sole, nor even the highest, ideal of mankind. Discipline means restraint, and entails artificiality. Clearness is apt to seem shallow, although turbidity is no proof of depth. Consciousness may verge on the theatrical: Heine called the French "les comédiens ordinaires du bon Dieu"; to the average Anglo-Saxon the graces of French society are "as good as a play"; and the histrionic element is palpable in such great characters as Louis XIV, Napoleon, and Victor Hugo. A polite training carefully blunts the edge of sincerity: a conversation in perspicuous French may be a model of "secret diplomacy." The masters of faultless technique may be deficient in creative genius, and justify Arnold's taunt: "France, famed in all great arts, in none supreme." Above all, conscious refinement may blur that "congruency with the unutterable" which is the fount of poetry and religion.[1]

Perhaps the greatest wonder in the history of the French is that they have achieved so much in spite of their culture. There is passion under their formality; there is a crusading zeal at the back of their logic. They may be noted for *savoir-vivre*; but they also know how to fling life away like a garment. In other words, they may be products of culture, but, above all, they are men. And our study of their national characteristics will not have been in vain if it enables us to tear off what, after all, is but a mask; if it leads us to realize, under the picturesque differences of language, custom, and fashion, the unity of the human race.

---

[1] It is significant that the existence of the lyrical note in French verse, and of a mystic ray in French thought, had to be demonstrated to a rather sceptical Anglo-Saxon public. Cf. *Défense de la Poésie Française*, by E. Legouis, and *The France of To-Day and Her Religious Evolution*, by P. Sabatier.

CHAPTER II

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

I. GENERAL SURVEY AND MOUNTAIN REGIONS

§ 1. FRANCE, A COMPLETED NATION.

A NATION is the result of two factors: the land and the people. The conquest of the soil by a new race, or the migration of a population to a new habitat, marks the beginning of a new nation. Thus France was not France until the era of folk-wanderings was closed, and until the different elements within her borders had begun to amalgamate. Thus Australia is a new nation, although as purely British in stock and speech as Great Britain herself. A common habitat is a bond of union no less potent than blood relationship; and it is bound to bring about blood relationship, unless the original differences of race and religion be absolutely insurmountable. The first gleam of patriotism that we descry in the Middle Ages was territorial rather than racial. It was " douce France," her soil and her skies, that the companions of Charlemagne, in the epic, or the Crusaders, were sighing for. The land slowly moulds the people; the people, with patient toil, alter the face of the land. Clearing forests, draining marshes, tilling the fields, building roads and rearing cities, they humanize the landscape after their own image. Thus, after countless generations, there results the perfected product, the Nation, land and people, body and soul, bound together by innumerable and subtle ties.

France is a country of Western Europe, situated just half-way between the North Pole and the Equator. It is roughly hexagonal in shape. Of this hexagon, three sides are formed by the sea—the North Sea and the Channel, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Mediterranean. Two are formed by mountains—the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Jura. The sixth, from Lauterburg on the Rhine to Dunkirk, is a purely artificial line, which has fluctuated for centuries with the fate of the French arms, and cuts across the valleys of the Moselle, the Meuse, and the Scheldt. Although the present boundaries of France coincide neither with natural accidents—mountain range or broad river—nor with the limits of the French language, it seems reasonable to assume that France in Europe has reached her final shape. Now that Alsace-Lorraine has been restored, and after a plebiscite has been taken in the Saar Valley, there will not be an inch of territory upon which the French will advance any claim ; and there is no part of France that desires either total independence or union with another country.

§ 2. France, an Epitome of Europe ; Northern rather than Mediterranean.

A glance at the map of Europe will reveal the fact that France, and France alone, participates in the whole life of the continent. France is at the same time a Mediterranean, an Atlantic, and a northern power ; she is not landlocked, as was the case with the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, as was and is more than ever the case with Russia. She is not isolated, like Spain or Scandinavia. Nothing European can remain alien to her.

Our culture originated in the Mediterranean basin. Gaul was conquered and assimilated by Rome, and France remains, to the present day, in her speech and in her habits of thought, the daughter of Rome. It cannot be denied that the so-called Latin nations form a well-defined group. Their bond of union is something deeper than the use of wine and of closely related languages. There is much in common between their artistic and political temperaments, and it is significant that the Protestant Reformation failed to conquer either France, Italy, or Spain. Yet it would be no paradox to maintain that, in spite of historical associations, France is predominantly a northern, and not a Mediterranean, nation. From her Latin " sisters " she is separated by the highest mountains in Europe, the Alps and the Pyrenees. Her Mediterranean coast, although it possesses the greatest French harbour, Marseilles, is comparatively short, and not intimately connected with the interior. The southern valleys of the Rhône and the Garonne are inferior in area to the northern basins of the Loire and the Seine. From the north came the Gauls, the Franks, the Normans ;

in the north grew the power of the Capetian kings. Paris, the centre of the political, economic, and military life of the country, is within a hundred miles of the Channel, a hundred and ten from the Belgian frontier, and no less than four hundred, as the crow flies, from the Mediterranean. If we translate these geographical facts into cultural terms, we may say that the *Song of Roland*, Gothic architecture, and the theology of John Calvin, all products of Northern France, are fully as French as the love-lyrics of the Troubadours.[1]

§ 3. NATURAL UNITY OF FRANCE.

France is thus part and parcel of the huge Eurasiatic continent. But it is not a slice cut at random and without a unity of its own. Scant as was the knowledge of the Greek discoverers, Strabo had already noted the balance and harmony of mountains, plains, and rivers, which seemed the result of intelligent foresight; and geographers are inclined to endorse the dictum of the Romantic historian Michelet: " France is a person."

This natural unity of France is not the result of a single factor like one mighty range or stream: it is the result of complex causes.

Of the great surrection of primary rocks which once ran across Europe from Bohemia to Wales, two main fragments remain in France, Armorica[2] and the Central Mountains (Massif Central). The latter, under the formidable pressure of the geologic waves to which the Alps and Pyrenees are due, were dislocated, and lifted in part above their former altitude. The mountains of France, therefore, belong to different systems and ages, and offer very different aspects. Whilst primitive Armorica and Ardennes have been eroded into plateaux of moderate elevation, the comparatively recent Alps and Pyrenees have preserved the sharpness of their outlines.

---

[1] It is asserted that the political and oratorical aptitudes of the Southerners have given them a place in the management of public affairs out of all proportion with the economic importance of their region. Of the ten presidents of the Third Republic, only three, however, were Southerners (Thiers, Loubet, Fallières), and the predominance of the south in French politics was never so clearly marked as that of Scotland in British politics not many years ago. The French centre of gravity shows no sign of moving south. An imaginative geographer, Onésime Reclus, claims that the development of a new France, larger than the old, on the African shore of the Mediterranean will make Marseilles, instead of Paris, the capital of the new complex. This may be a startling prophecy; we are inclined to consider it as a " tartarinade."

[2] We use the ancient term Armorica for the geological region, much larger than the province of Brittany.

The rest of France consists mainly in three groups of plains: the Parisian basin, which includes the watershed of the river Seine and much of the middle Loire; the Aquitanian basin, watered by the Garonne and the Dordogne; and the narrow valley of the Saône and Rhône. Now the chief factor in the unity of France is the fact that communications have always been easy from each of these basins into the others. Thus, ascending the Rhône and its tributary the Saône, we come to the rich province of Burgundy, whence we pass easily into the valleys of the Loire, of the Seine and its affluents, and even of the Meuse and the Rhine. The Pass of Naurouze, between the Pyrenean foothills and the last of the Cevennes, gives access from the Mediterranean to the valley of the Garonne. Only 640 feet high, it was used as early as the reign of Louis XIV for a canal, and the transformation of this canal so as to admit sea-going vessels is not beyond the range of possibility. Most important of all is the depression of Poitou, which, between the primitive masses of Armorica and the Central Mountains, connects the great basins of Paris and of Aquitania. There we find one of the important keys to French history: had Poitou been less accessible, Aquitania would be a separate nation to-day.

§ 4. The Voluntary Element in French Unity.

When we come to the north-eastern frontier of France, however, geographical explanations break down entirely. There is no apparent reason why France should not have reached the left bank of the Rhine, as did ancient Gaul: this frontier, the dream of the old monarchy, was attained through the marvellous victories of the French Revolution from 1792 to 1795, only to be lost in 1814 through the frenzied policy of the arch-gambler Napoleon. There was even no reason why she should not have controlled the whole valley of the Rhine, with that of the Main, as did the Austrasian Kingdom, or as did Napoleon, the Protector of the Rhine Confederacy. On the other hand, France might have been much smaller than she is to-day: there was nothing inherently absurd in the ambition of Charles the Bold, the last of the independent dukes of Burgundy: a new state with the Meuse as its central artery, connecting Burgundy and the Netherlands. Nature made it possible for a nation to grow between the Channel and the Pyrenees: but Nature did not make the nation. That was the work of men, and of men increasingly conscious of their purpose. If we bear in mind this historical and voluntary character of French unity, we shall be less inclined to ignore the extraordinary diversity of aspects offered by the land of France. Whoever wishes to know France and to understand her people should explore her different provinces. Michelet, who, first among modern historians, insisted upon the geographical basis of national life, will be found an inspiring guide, but hardly a systematic one.[1] Vidal de la Blache gives an admirable description, not only of the main regions, but of the smaller districts, of the *pays*, natural units as old as independent Gaul, and which have survived all political regimes. In this rapid survey we must limit ourselves to the larger subdivisions.

§ 5. BRITTANY.

France is by no means a smiling garden in every one of her parts, and the first distinction to be drawn is between the mountainous areas, barren, isolated, unprogressive, and the rich, hospitable plains, where men congregate in great cities.

Among the former we should place *Brittany*—a huge slab of granite, flung as the western bastion of the continent against the Atlantic. The interior of Brittany is a rugged country, savage and sombre without grandeur. It is partly covered with black mountains, worn down to the size of hills by æonial erosion, but still forbidding. Groves of stunted oaks alternate with moors of gorse and broom; rye takes the place of wheat; the very cattle are of an undersized breed; and cider is less sweet than in the neighbouring province, opulent Normandy. The coast, assailed by the age-long fury of the ocean, is, in the north and west, deeply indented with fjords, fringed with islands and sunken reefs. A tragic shore, fertile in shipwrecks: the wild inhabitants were long accused of turning these into a profitable industry, and of bringing them about by means of delusive lights. The land is swathed in ocean mist: hence a mild climate, which allows violets to grow in mid-winter, and makes market-gardening profitable in every coast valley and cove: this forms the Golden Belt of Brittany, a Cimmerian Riviera. Each little fjord shelters a fishing village, like Paimpol and Tréguier, whence a fleet of sturdy brigs starts every year for Iceland or Newfoundland. From afar the returning sailor descries the tall, fretted granite spire, heart and sole pride of the humble city. These eyries of sea-birds alone are truly Breton. Nantes and St. Nazaire, on the Loire, industrial and shipping centres; Rennes, the university seat and old-time capital; Lorient, an artificial creation and a failure both as a commercial port and as a naval base; Brest, the great arsenal, the chief bridgehead of the American Expeditionary Forces, all belong to France rather than to Armor.[1]

---

[1] Tableau de la France.

The Bretons are a strange people, short, dark-haired, blue-eyed. Unlike the French, they are still very prolific, and their country, neither fertile nor rich in minerals, is one of the most densely populated in France. Celtic is still the speech of the majority in the western districts; the old costumes have not yet been wholly discarded, nor the old customs, such as the great pilgrimages or Pardons; neither have many decades of centralizing democracy and aggressive anticlericalism been able to root out the old loyalty to King and Church. Isolated in its corner of the land, in its traditions and its language, Brittany offers the pathetic spectacle of a small nation whose soul is relentlessly stifled by the pressure of an alien civilization. Yet France has dealt not unfairly with Brittany. The numbness which has seized its original culture is not the result of persecution: the "oppression" is well-meaning and almost intangible; the "victim" is driven to silent melancholy rather than rebellion: perhaps persecution were kinder. The daughters of Brittany emigrate to Paris as domestic servants; with conscription and the influx of summer tourists, the men are becoming frenchified. The last biniou (bag-pipe) will probably be played for the benefit of American trippers. It is a poignantly attractive soul which is thus dying under our eyes—rugged and misty like the Breton shore; the greatest legends of adventure, mysticism, and passion in the Middle Ages came from Celtic sources, and the history of religion in nineteenth-century France could be summed up in three Breton names, Chateaubriand, Lamennais, Renan.

---

[1] To the Armorican group, geologically and historically speaking, belongs Vendée, south of the Loire—a land of difficult communications and meagre resources, where, in 1794, obstinacy and ignorance flared into heroism. M. Clemenceau is of Vendéen stock.

§ 6. The Central Mountains.

The Central Mountains (Massif Central) are another block of primitive geological formation, and another citadel for a primitive population; but whilst the country is much more varied and picturesque than Brittany, the people have failed to arouse the same interest and sympathy. The whole region is vaguely triangular in shape. Its substratum is granitic, but it was torn by volcanic and other activities; tumbling circles of eruptive débris, huge streams of lava, masses of basalt, cover a great portion of the primitive rocks. To the east the uplands end abruptly, forming the long range of the Cévennes, which towers above the Rhône valley, its foothills crested with mediæval ruins. To the north-west they slope gently into the plateaux of Gentioux and Millevaches, covered with pastures; to the south they merge into vast chalky tablelands, the bleak and desert Causses, through which the Tarn and its affluents have carved for themselves picturesque cañons—miniature replicas of the mighty Colorado.

The Central Mountains are not devoid of natural resources. There is good agricultural land in some of the valleys, particularly in the famous Limagne, the dry bed of an ancient lake. The western slopes, abundantly watered by Atlantic rains, are suited to cattle-breeding; the mineral springs[1] attract valetudinarians and tourists; coal-mines have made it possible for St. Etienne to prosper in the curiously contrasted industries of fire-arms and silk ribbons; Limoges owes its fame to the deposits of fine porcelain clay or kaolin, which enable France to rival Saxony and China. But the greater part of the region is poor. A portion of the population relies upon chestnuts for its staple food; the Causses with their scanty growth of grass, are the haunt of vast flocks of sheep, and the home of a world-famous industry, that of Roquefort cheese.

The Auvergnats are short and stocky like the Bretons, but darker. They have not preserved their Celtic language, and speak chiefly dialects of Southern French. They, too, emigrate to the great cities: the Auvergnat street-vendor of roast chestnuts, returning to Paris with the early frosts, is called the "winter-swallow" of the capital. Auvergnats have also a hold of the retail fuel trade and of the junk business; the Limousins are famed as masons. Thick of tongue and slow of gait, they are the butt of Parisian wit;[1] but their perseverance and thrift have enabled many of them to amass wealth at the expense of the jesters. In sharp contrast with the slender steeples of Brittany, Auvergne offers a curious type of Romanesque churches, squat and robust like the race itself, yet not devoid of charm. The great architectural renaissance in America to which the name of Richardson is attached was partly inspired by Auvergnat models. The Auvergnats still remember with pride that they led the Gallic resistance against Cæsar; and the region that gave birth to Blaise Pascal need not blush of its cultural heritage.[2]

---

[1] Royat, la Bourboule, le Mont-Dore, Vals, Vichy, St.-Galmier.

§ 7. The Pyrenees.

The Pyrenees rise like a wall separating France from Spain—a wall so straight, so abrupt, so unbroken that until a few years ago there was no rail line across it between Hendaye on the Gulf of Gascony and Port-Vendres on the Mediterranean. Wild and magnificent mountains they are, a fit stage for the legendary exploits of a Roland. As a scene of weird grandeur, the amphitheatre or *cirque* of Gavarnie can hardly be surpassed. Exposed to the moist winds of the Atlantic, the French Pyrenees are well watered, expecially their western half. The abruptness of the slopes, however, and the reckless destruction of the forests, are not favourable to the formation of peaceable rivers: except the Adour and the Garonne, the Pyrenean streams are picturesque and destructive torrents. Even before the war these torrents were being harnessed for electric power, and the whole Southern Railway system was to use what French engineers poetically call "white coal."

Impassable though they seem, the Pyrenees do not form a strict ethnic frontier. At their western end we find, both on the French and on the Spanish sides, the curious Basque or Euskara people, clinging to its archaic and mysterious language, preserving its well-defined type and customs. The Basques, a nimble, vigorous, quick-witted race, are noted for their skill in the game of pelota, and for their daring as smugglers.[1] They emigrate to South America, where they form a very successful element in those new communities. In the centre of the Pyrenees we find another quaint survival: the peasant Republic of Andorra, a handful of shepherds under the joint protectorate of a French prefect and a Spanish bishop. At the eastern end, Roussillon belongs, linguistically, to Catalonia, the most industrious as well as the most restive of the provinces of Spain. The dialect of Catalonia, the physique of her inhabitants, their hard-working and democratic temperament, are French rather than Iberian. The old Spanish March of Charlemagne, later the County of Barcelona, remained for centuries part of the French domain.

---

[1] Rabelais, Molière, Labiche.

[2] Among Auvergnat cities may be mentioned Clermont-Ferrand, old capital and university seat; Le Puy-en-Velay, a famous pilgrimage, dotted with interesting monuments, in one of the weirdest volcanic sites to be found in Europe.

Like the Central Mountains, the Pyrenees are renowned for their thermal and mineral springs—Salies de Béarn, Barèges, Cauterets, Luchon.[2] To these health resorts must be added Biarritz, on the Gulf of Gascony, made fashionable by the Spanish-born Empress Eugenie; and Lourdes, with its miraculous grotto, the goal of innumerable pilgrims and the scene of many well-authenticated cures. The most active city is Bayonne, a thriving port on the Adour; but the most attractive is Pau, the old capital of Béarn. The region gave France the most popular, and in many ways the most thoroughly French, of her kings, Henry of Navarre.

§ 8. The Alps and Corsica.

The Alps extend in a gigantic curve from Savona on the Gulf of Genoa to the suburbs of Vienna on the Danube—a distance of over 600 miles. One-third of that distance, with an average width of 120 miles, belongs to the French Alps, from Mentone to Mont Blanc. The Franco-Italian frontier follows pretty closely the crest of the Alps. But the French slope is long, and descends by a series of steps to the valley of the Rhône, whereas there is a precipitous drop to the valley of the Po. The French Alps are hardly, if at all, inferior to the Swiss in height and beauty. Wonderful is the range of scenery they offer: the smiling shores of the lakes of Geneva, Annecy, and Le Bourget; the tragic grandeur of Mont Blanc, la Vanoise, and the Alps of Dauphiny; the wooded solitudes of La Grande Chartreuse; and, in the south, the Maritime Alps, clear and bare under an African sky, their foothills clad with cypress and olive trees, with the glorious Corniche Road, a long ribbon of flower gardens and winter resorts, fringing the dark blue Mediterranean. Beauty was long the sole asset of the Alps—and a neglected asset at that, for even at present, with the exception of Chamounix and Grenoble, the Alps of Savoy and Dauphiny are not so plentifully advertised, nor so skilfully organized, as those of neighbouring Switzerland. But, there again, hydro-electric power was working wonders on the eve of the war, and, from the war, it has received an extraordinary impetus. As in the Pyrenees, *white coal* is running trains, lighting cities, transforming mountain wildernesses into beehives of chemical and metallurgical industries. The population is still sparse in these rocky altitudes; the villages, untouched by the industrial revolution, are still wretchedly poor; the people often stunted and in certain cases almost degenerate. The Savoyard boy, with his marmot and hurdy-gurdy, or more prosaically employed as a chimney-sweep, was long a familiar character in French life; whilst the young men of other regions emigrate to Latin-America, and bring loyally back to their native mountains the modest wealth amassed in transatlantic Eldorados. It was J. J. Rousseau who revealed to the French the beauty and spiritual message of the Alps; and French civilization would fain lay claim to his birthplace, Geneva, already conquered for the French spirit by the masterful genius of Calvin.

---

[1] Cf. P. Loti's *Ramuntcho*, a charming tale of Basque customs.

[2] Cf. H. Taine: *Voyage aux Pyrénées*.

The Mediterranean shore of the Alpine region is Italian rather than Provençal. Yet there is no irredentist movement to be feared. Nice, a cosmopolitan capital of pleasure, was freely ceded to France after a plebiscite of the inhabitants, and her most famous son, Garibaldi, was the first to come to the aid of the French in 1870. Let us note, in passing the eagle's nest of the Grimaldis, the tiny principality of Monaco, known the world over for its elaborate and almost oppressive beauty, for its gambling hell, and for the services of its ruler to the science of the sea.

Mountainous and Italian, likewise, is the wild island of Corsica, a hundred miles from the French coast: a picturesque and unproductive land, covered with rocks and *macchi*, or wildernesses of scrubby brushwood; inhabited by a primitive population, superstitious and violent, still addicted to brigandage and to clan feud or *vendetta*. A mere accident, but a tremendous one, has made this alien and rebellious possession an indissoluble part of the French nation: Ajaccio, the capital of Corsica, is the birthplace of Napoleon. The two emperors employed many of their countrymen in the army and in the secret service; and the worship of Bonaparte has turned every Corsican into a devoted Frenchman.

§ 9. Jura and Vosges.

North of the Alps we find the blue ridges of sylvan and pastoral Jura. Its parallel undulations, similar to those of the Appalachian system, offer as great an obstacle to rail communications as the formidable but deeply indented Alps. The Jura is not a boundary of French culture. The same industries are found on the Franc-Comtois and on the Swiss sides of the border: the manufacture of small wooden objects,[1] of cheese, and of fine watches: Besançon, the old provincial capital, the birthplace of Victor Hugo, possesses a well-equipped laboratory for the testing of those instruments. The boundary between the French and the German languages is some twenty miles further east, and the Swiss Catholic University of Neuchâtel has done some excellent service for the study of French culture.

Last among the major mountains of France, we come to the Vosges. They are separated from the Jura by the pass of Belfort, with its impregnable fortress, so valiantly defended in 1871 by Denfert-Rochereau, so admirably symbolized by the wounded and defiant lion carved by Bartholdi. The Vosges are beautiful mountains, with their grassy, dome-like summits (Ballons), and their slopes thickly clad with pines and beeches. Their streams have long provided power for the saw-mills, and also for the cotton-spinning factories of Alsace. The crest of the Vosges, or rather a strategic line drawn by the German General Staff with its usual thoroughness of purpose, was for nearly half a century the frontier between France and Germany; it was also, with the exception of a few French-speaking villages in Alsace, the limit of the two languages. But, on the eastern side, the hearts of the people had been French for over two hundred years.

[1] Saint Claude.

CHAPTER III

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

II. VALLEYS AND PLAINS

§ 1. THE RHÔNE AND SAÔNE VALLEY.

FROM these picturesque mountain regions, centres of resistance, as it were, in the growth of the country, we now turn to the centres of attraction and progress, the fertile plains, and the highways of commerce and culture. First among these, in the history of France, was the Mediterranean coast and the valley of the Rhône and Saône. Let us reverse the historical order, and descend the valley which Roman arms and Roman laws ascended twenty centuries ago.

Burgundy.

We start from Burgundy, one of the keystones of the French edifice, the great divide whence rivers flow north and south, connected by no less than five canals. Burgundy is also the meeting-place where Gauls, Romans, and Burgundians combined to form a stalwart, industrious, eloquent race: the rhetoric of Eumenius at Autun found amplified echoes in Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, Bossuet of Dijon, Buffon of Montbard, Lamartine of Mâcon. A province of varied riches and ancient renown, whose destinies balanced for a while those of Capetian France. There we find the great wine districts of Chablis, Nuits and Beaune; there also mines and manufactures, with Le Creusot, an industrial fief over which the Schneider dynasty reigns as securely as the Krupp did in Essen. Following the equable course of the Saône, lined with pleasant hills, we leave to the east the glaciary plateau of the Dombes, dotted with fever-breeding ponds. After rounding the spur of Mont d'Or, the

Saône reaches Lyons, and loses itself into the mightier Rhône.

Lyons.

There are few more picturesque sites for a great city than that of Lyons, with its two contrasting rivers, its bold hills, from which, when the prevailing mists are swept away, the distant Alps may be seen. This old capital of Roman Gaul, still the ecclesiastical metropolis of France, accepts but grudgingly the supremacy of Paris: there is a Lyonnese culture, minor perhaps, but not exactly provincial. The city of the silk-weavers is a strange compound of religious mysticism, practical sense, and revolutionary aspirations: the Royalist insurrection of 1793, the Socialist uprisings of 1831 and 1834, the abortive Commune of 1871, and the votive Basilica of Fourvières, are all parts of the Lyonnese tradition.

The Rhône, a great Alpine torrent issuing from the Swiss glaciers, pacified and filtered for a while by its passage through Lake Leman, is suddenly deflected in its westward course by the wall of the Cévennes, and, from Lyons, rushes headlong to the south. Abundant, but swift and capricious, it cannot compare in usefulness with the calm and modest Saône and Seine. But hydro-electric plants are already harnessing its untamed strength; and its valley is wilder, more romantic, than that of the commercialized and somewhat theatrical Rhine. On every spur frown the ruins of a feudal castle, as picturesque as any burg. That narrow and wind-swept valley is full of classical memories: Vienne, once the rival of Lyons; Valence; Orange, where the ruins of the great theatre lived again to the voice of Mounet-Sully; Avignon, the city of the Popes; Arles, the home of Mistral, and famed for the Grecian beauty of its daughters. Just above Arles begins the delta of the Rhône, enclosing the low-lying Camargue, the domain of wild cattle.

Provence.

East of the lower Rhône lies Provence, "fragrant and beggarly," with its fig and olive trees on the slopes of dusty hills. Its commercial metropolis is Marseilles, first port and second city in France, the gateway to Algeria, the Levant, and the Far East: a bustling cosmopolitan centre, Mediterranean rather than French, with hordes of Italians and a strong contingent of Greeks. Northern France, with its comparative sluggishness of gesture and imagination, wonders at the constant waving of arms and wagging of tongues on the Cannebière, Marseilles's famous thoroughfare. But a huge harbour won upon the sea, a canal connecting it with the Rhône through the largest tunnel of its kind in the world, prove that all is not chatter and mirage in Marseilles's activities.

Languedoc.

West of the Rhône the coast is low, marshy, malarial. With the exception of Cette, all the large cities—Narbonne, Béziers, Montpellier, Nîmes—are found inland, in the rich alluvial plain, in touch with the hills covered with vine plants. The districts of Aude and Hérault are heavy producers of good table wine. A small but active coal-basin adds to the general prosperity. There, also, the traces of Roman rule are everywhere in evidence: Narbonne was prosperous before Cæsar's time; Nîmes is rich in admirable ancient monuments. Montpellier keeps alive its fame, won in the Middle Ages, as a centre of medical studies.

This south-eastern region of France, so anciently civilized, so rich, so varied, forming one of the main axes of European commerce, possessing such cities as Lyons and Marseilles, ought, it seems, to have remained the centre of national life. If it has fallen behind, it is not because the north was inhabited by a stronger race—the north borrowed many of its leaders from the south—but because the area of the Rhône and Saône valley is comparatively small, and its long, slender strip of territory unsuitable to the growth of a powerful state.

§ 2. The Aquitanian Basin.

In these respects, the Atlantic South-West is more favoured than the Mediterranean South-East. If the Garonne is less abundant and more irregular than the Rhône, its valley is considerably wider; and the whole region, freely open to the ocean breeze, sheltered from extreme heat and cold by the double barrier of the Pyrenees and the Central Mountains, enjoys a mild climate, less equable than that of Brittany, but warmer and sunnier. Fruit grows a-plenty along the Garonne, particularly in the district of Agen, the "Prune Capital"; and claret, lovingly prepared in the châteaux or estates of Médoc, has for centuries made Bordeaux a thriving city. Thus the Aquitanian basin, from earliest times, was destined to be rich, populous, and cultured. Bordeaux was noted for its schools under the Roman Empire; Toulouse, in the Middle Ages, became the centre of an original and brilliant civilization. Iberians, Romans and Visigoths, with possibly a dash of Saracens, are the ancestors of the present population, rather than Gauls, Franks, and Normans. The Gascons, if we may use this rather vague and misleading term, are chiefly known for the romantic heroism and braggadocio of d'Artagnan and Cyrano de Bergerac: perhaps should we rather remember the cool-headed shrewdness of less legendary characters, such as Montaigne and Montesquieu.

Why did the south-west succumb before the ruder north in the thirteenth century, and why has it remained second to the north ever since? First of all, on account of its comparative isolation. Cut off from Spain by the Pyrenees, opening on the stormy Bay of Biscay and the long-uncharted Atlantic, it is in immediate contact neither with the Mediterranean nor with the bulk of continental Europe. Then, because of the lack of industrial resources, coal and iron. Finally, because of the absence of inner unity. One-third of the region is drained by the Dordogne, which does not join the Garonne until both have reached tide-water. Not only is the south-west drained by two main rivers, but on the chief of these it has two capitals, Toulouse and Bordeaux. Toulouse leads in art, Bordeaux in commerce. But Toulouse, built of brick, on the yet adolescent Garonne, cannot compare for metropolitan magnificence with Bordeaux, whose stone houses form a grand crescent along its busy quays.[1]

Between Bordeaux and the Pyrenees, along the coast, lies a long stretch of sand-dunes, the Landes, so loose and shifting that the rare shepherds used to go their rounds on long stilts. Extensive forests of pine have averted the danger of the dunes drifting further inland; they have also imparted severe beauty, as well as no little wealth, to that once desolate region, of which Arcachon is the queen. North of the Garonne and Dordogne we find the small basin of the Charente, with the paper-mills of Angoulême, the distilleries of Cognac, and the slowly dying naval base of Rochefort. Twenty miles further north, in the most unpicturesque surroundings—a filled-in gulf, flat and marshy—there rises the quaint and attractive city of La Rochelle, the heroic sea-capital of the Huguenots.

---

[1] Historically, Toulouse is part of Mediterranean Languedoc rather than of Atlantic Aquitania, or Guyenne-et-Gascogne.

§ 3. The Parisian Basin.

The geological map of France offers two great tertiary basins, the Aquitanian and the Parisian, all but separated by two great masses of primary rocks, Armorica and the Central Mountains. Poitou is the link between these two basins, and therefore a point of vital importance in French history. It was a victory near Poitiers (Vouillé) that opened to the Franks of Clovis the whole south of Gaul; it was between Tours and Poitiers that Charles Martel stemmed the Saracenic invasion; and there again the Black Prince defeated and captured John II, king of France. The northern basin is larger and more regular than the Aquitanian. Along the periphery of this vast tertiary circle there crops out a belt of cretaceous formation; and, around that, an outer belt of Jurassic rock. On the eastern side of the basin the passage from one geologic formation to another is marked by a series of concentric ridges, insignificant enough as measured in feet, but which have played a decisive rôle in the military life of the country.[1]

The Parisian basin is of moderate altitude, and not far from the sea; but it is also united, without any obstacle, to the great mass of Central Europe. In consequence, it possesses, and at times enjoys, a climate in which both maritime and continental influences are felt. On the whole it is cool, but not extreme. Snow-storms have impeded the Franco-British operations in April 1917, and the river Seine, the same winter, was frozen in Paris; but in general the capital is more familiar with slush and sleet than with ice and snow. This climate is fairly moist, and as fickle as Parisian fashions: the proverbial "climate of samples."

The land is fertile, but by no means strikingly or uniformly so. Not far from Paris, a flat and chalky part of Champagne is justly called "pouilleuse" (beggarly). Sologne, in the bend of the Loire south of Orleans, is marshy and unproductive; and whilst Touraine is praised as "the garden of France," the name is true only of the valleys: a few miles back, the country is mediocre. But the level plain of Beauce is one of the granaries of Paris—a glimpse of the American North-West, except that nowhere in Iowa or Nebraska would the immense monotony of the wheat-fields be relieved by such a miracle of Gothic splendour as Chartres. The whole of Normandy is as gently picturesque, as softly luxuriant, as the best parts of England: a province of pastures green along the banks of quiet, full-flowing rivers, and of orchards snowy in April with apple-blossoms. Normandy is an industrial region as well, with the cotton-spinning of Rouen and Elbeuf, and the ironworks of Caen; it is also a maritime power, with Dieppe, Cherbourg, Caen, and especially Rouen and Le Hâvre. A fine race, with unmistakable traces of Scandinavian influences, dwells therein: a race of conquerors, but threatened, all but defeated, by alcoholism.

---

[1] Cf. the Argonne in 1792 and 1914–18.

Seine and Middle Loire.

This Parisian basin is the cradle of France; at its very centre the "duchy between Seine and Loire" was the patrimony of the Capetian kings. There was spoken the dialect destined to become standard French; there grew, exemplified by the cathedrals of Laon, Paris, Noyon, Chartres, Rheims, Amiens, Bourges, Beauvais, Rouen, Tours, the magnificent art justly called "opus francigenum," and "Gothic" only in undeserved derision. For a time it seemed doubtful whether the Loire or the Seine would see the rise of a national centre. Bourges, the capital of Charles VII, is, on the map at least, the heart of the country. Orleans is of commanding strategic importance: its relief by Joan of Arc, its capture by the Germans in 1871, were decisive in two great wars. Tours was one of the ecclesiastical metropolises of Gaul. The Valois kings have dotted the Loire regions with castles, from the mean and forbidding abode of Louis XI at Plessis-lès-Tours to the chaos of beauty of Blois, the airy grace of Chenonceaux and the solitary magnificence of Chambord. In 1871 it was seriously proposed to transfer the permanent capital of France to Bourges or Tours. The reasons why the Loire had to yield pride of place to the Seine are partly geographical, partly political. The Seine, first of all, is by far the more useful highway of commerce. It has not preserved the even-flowing temper for which it was praised by the Emperor Julian: thanks to the deforestation of its upper basin and to the vagaries of its affluent the Yonne, it is capable of destructive floods, and Paris would not easily have forgotten the tragic experience of 1913, had not man, so soon afterwards, outdone the cruelty of nature. But as a rule the Seine is a modest, placid, serviceable river, navigable over nearly its entire length, accessible to large vessels as far as Rouen: the cost of two days' modern fighting would turn Paris itself into a seaport. The Loire, on the contrary, is incorrigibly capricious and violent. Tumbling down from the bare Central Mountains, it reaches the plain, at times a rivulet meandering amid an immense bed of sand, at times a fierce torrent precariously confined between huge levies; never a help, often a danger.

Then the Seine is without question the main artery of a large region; the Loire has no definite domain of its own. Up to the vicinity of Orleans it takes its course northward, as though to join the Seine near Paris: the canal of Briare carries out that excellent intention. Not a range, not even a ridge, but a mere plateau of moderate elevation deflects the Loire westward. The Loíre leads from a province of little wealth, Auvergne, to one even less favoured with worldly goods, Brittany; the Seine is the highway from Burgundy to Normandy, both among the richest parts of France. The Loire has no economic outlet but the ocean, long the mysterious end of the world; the Seine is connected, through the Marne and the Oise, with the whole of Central Europe, and particularly with the rich industrial district of Flanders. Economic opportunities attracted, and strategic danger retained, the French kings within easy distance of their most exposed frontier, that of the north-east.[1] And the capital grew where Seine, Marne, and Oise converged; there, too, highways and railroads had to meet almost inevitably.

---

[1] For the same reason did Trêves become the capital of Gaul in late Roman times.

Paris.

There is no more delicate problem in the history of French civilization than that of the relations between Paris and the rest of France. In the eyes of the world Paris is France—a half-truth as pernicious as many lies. Paris leads, but does not rule. It did not conquer France as Rome conquered the world: it grew with the nation, and through the nation. Yet Paris is not identical with France: France is proud of Paris, but distrustful as well; Paris is deeply patriotic, but it has faults, virtues, and aspirations of its own. The Commune was not merely the brain-storm of a city maddened by humiliation and famine: its desires for local autonomy and international brotherhood were deep in Parisian hearts. A Parisian loves every stone of his city with as exclusive a love as a peasant may feel for the steeple of his home church: Paris is in that sense profoundly parochial. At the same time, although there is a much larger proportion of foreigners in other great centres, especially in New York, there is no large city in which the heart of the natives is more genuinely cosmopolitan. These three loyalties—to Paris, to France, and to the world—conflict or blend in many unexpected ways, touching or ludicrous. Victor Hugo preached a comfortable gospel that would reconcile all these tendencies: Paris is the torch-bearer of France, and France the vanguard of mankind. But Paris is neither "the new Rome of Free-Thought and Democracy" nor the "modern Babylon": it is Paris and nothing else, most baffling and best beloved among the cities of men.

§ 4. RHINE, MEUSE, AND SCHELDT.

We shall round off our survey with those outlying parts of France which send their waters to the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt. Outlying indeed, cut off by political accident from their natural complements in the lower valleys, hybrid or mixed in race and sometimes in language, long indifferent or hostile to France, but now more ardently French than the very Ile-de-France.

Alsace.

The beautiful plain of Alsace, between Vosges and Rhine,[1] has been for centuries the meeting-point of Gallic and Teutonic cultures. Of this happy blending, the great Munster of Strasbourg is a magnificent product and symbol. Teutonic stature and a Celtic head form, Teutonic customs and a French temperament, Latin thoughts expressed in a Germanic dialect, such is the curious dualism presented by Alsace. This fundamental fact was freely recognized, under French rule, by a liberal policy of bilingualism: the Germans strove during half a century for the Entwelschung or de-Frenchification of Alsace, and only secured the deep-seated hostility of that stubborn folk. A rich province withal, and justly dear to its inhabitants; with park-like forests in the upper slopes of the Vosges, hops and vine on the hill sides, varied crops in the Lowlands, and, especially near Mulhouse, a thriving metallurgic and textile industry. Strasbourg, on its sleepy canals, with its stôrk-haunted, three-storied gable roofs, and the audacious fretwork of its cathedral spire, is one of the quaintest and most appealing cities in Europe. The Germans had developed three great assets in Strasbourg: a vast port on the Rhine, a well-equipped University, and a centre of local government. Under new conditions, the town may have to go through a rather trying period of readjustment.

---

[1] Note that the vital stream, in Alsace, was not until recently the Rhine, but the Ill.

Lorraine.

It was in Strasbourg that the Marseillaise first fired the hearts of the Crusaders of democracy. It was in the sister province of Lorraine that Joan of Arc was born, the purest symbol of monarchical and catholic France. Lorraine is watered by the Moselle and the Meuse. The former runs through the two capitals of the province: Nancy, the city of the ancient dukes, rebuilt by King Stanislaus Leckzinsky into a masterpiece of eighteenth-century architecture, "spirituelle," yet dignified; a commercial, industrial, scientific, and artistic centre of no mean importance, especially since 1871 and the loss of Strasbourg; then Metz, with its splendid cathedral and its modest old streets, dwarfed but not humbled by the pretentious new quarters of the German conquerors. The Meuse winds its way through chasms of grey rocks, past the unconquered ruins of Verdun, past Sedan and Mézières, and, in Belgium, past Dinant, Namur, and Liége, all of tragic memory. A harsh climate, a mediocre soil, a taciturn race, and the first blows at every invasion: Lorraine was not over-favoured by fate. But the discovery of a new smelting process made it possible to work the long-despised iron ore, and now the north-eastern corner of Lorraine has become one of the greatest metallurgic centres in Europe. Before the war Poles and Italians had to be called into both the French and the German parts of the basin, in order to cope with the ever-increasing demands of the new industry.

Flanders.

We come at last to French Flanders, drained by the Sambre, the Scheldt, and the Lys. The boundary between Belgium and France is absolutely artificial. Flemish is spoken in Hazebrouck, just as French is spoken in Liége. The traditions, the industries, the arts of Lille, Douai, Cambrai, Valenciennes, Denain, are the same as those of Mons, Tournai, Courtrai, Ypres. The suburbs of the twin cities Roubaix-Tourcoing reach beyond the frontier. Even in our own days French and Belgian Flanders have suffered together, as together they had suffered and rejoiced in ages past.

There is hardly any richer or more industrious region in Europe than Flanders. Weaving of cloth and of linen, tapestry and lace making, brewing—all industries of ancient fame; coal mines, sugar refining, metallurgy, of more recent introduction: these kept busy and prosperous a population as teeming as that of Lancashire or Saxony. The blast of war passed with full force on that region, but the spirit of the people and the bounty of nature cannot be defeated. Nowhere in France is the network of railroads and canals so close-meshed. Lille, Roubaix, Tourcoing, and their suburbs form practically one city, the equal in size of Lyons or Marseilles. Boulogne, Calais, Dunkirk are the French ports of the north. But its veritable outlets are Antwerp and Paris. A healthy, almost animal enjoyment of life was rife in Flanders before the war: the spirit pictured in Rubens's Kermesse was not dead. Yet, thanks to its long traditions of wealth, culture, and municipal liberties, the province had not sunk into materialism. There both Catholics and Socialists had their strongholds. Lille had two thriving universities, and art was loved by a race which produced mystics as well as realists, and gave us, paradoxically, the silky, silvery daintiness of Watteau.

§ 5. Geography and the Nature of French Patriotism.

We have insisted upon the variety of French landscape and traditions: these are the true bases of life, and a return to healthy "regionalism" would be an excellent thing for an over-centralized nation. Yet the nation is one and indivisible, more so, perhaps, than any other in the world. This contrast between natural diversity and historical unity may help us to a better understanding of genuine French patriotism.

If patriotism had no other basis but physical geography, if it meant only the love of the land that our eyes have seen, then parochialism alone would be justified. Why should the Lorrainer care for Gascony, with its alien soil and sky? In primitive times each "pays" was a self-contained community, with its internal circulation of men, products, and money: there are traces of this purely local economic activity even to-day. As late as 1789 each province was as anxious to remain self-supporting as the great military nations of our own times. Centralization, and its corollary specialization, have greatly diminished the originality, harmony, and completeness of local life. A "pays" is no longer a miniature nation. Vidal de la Blache, at the close of his survey of the French "pays," confesses that it gives a picture of the France of yesterday rather than of the France of to-day. Railroads and national markets have obliterated minor physical boundaries. And the national frontier itself has long been outgrown. Take industrial cities at random—Lyons, Rouen, Roubaix—each drawing its materials from distant parts, or sending its finished products to the end of the world: economically, they are in France rather than essentially French. It took a thousand years to turn France from a congeries of *pays* into a genuine nation. But the same process which created the nation is at work beyond the nation, and cannot be reversed. Just as Hurepoix, Gâtinais, Vexin, Beauvoisis, Valois, were consolidated into Ile-de-France; just as Ile-de-France, Béarn, Alsace, Corsica, Brittany, were slowly welded into France; just as inevitably have the nations already surrendered in all but in name their separate existence, and the larger unit is only waiting for our formal recognition. Such is the lesson that geography will teach us, if it be studied as a dynamic science.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

III. WHO AND WHAT ARE THE FRENCH ?

§ 1. UNITY AND DIVERSITY.

THE people who dwell in the land of France present the same characteristics as the country: few extremes, yet infinite variety; a unity, an individuality, hard to define, but unmistakable. The French are not radically different from any of their neighbours: there is an easy shading off on all frontiers. The dramatic contrast between two elements in the population that strikes us at El Paso, Texas, for instance, has no counterpart in any French border town. The French offer a wide range of dissimilarity among themselves; Provençal and Norman belong to different worlds: yet Provençal and Norman are both distinctly French, and foreigners are seldom mistaken in picking out a Frenchman.

What is a National Type?

In analysing that national type we should first of all avoid a frequent confusion between the *average* and the *extreme*. It is the average, of course, that is really representative: but it is the extreme which generally attracts our notice. The "typical" Frenchman, in the minds of many Englishmen and Americans, is still the stage Frenchman—short, dark, and effusive. Now this is a caricature, not a portrait, and a caricature of the south, not of France as a whole. That "type," of its very nature, would court attention. Not numerous, but assertive and ubiquitous, it would create the impression of a multitude, like the supers in a pantomime, or the voters in an old-fashioned ward election.

Then we have to strip the "type" of the adventitious characteristics due to mere fashion, in dress, manners, speech, and thought. If this were done, it would be discovered, for instance, that many "typical" Parisians were made in Germany, like the late Albert Wolff. "Frenchiness" is often a product of the sartorial and tonsorial arts. Consider the striking family likeness between the portraits of any given period in all European countries—how, for instance, the big wigs of the classical age all but obliterate national differences. In the same way a flowing tie, a pointed beard, and a shrug of the shoulders used to make up a Frenchman in Anglo-Saxon eyes; but it was a mere make-up. This is obvious enough: but characteristics which are thought to be much deeper may also be just a matter of fashion. The airy sarcasm of Voltaire, the bland irony of Renan, the courtly anarchism of Anatole France, are *profoundly* French. Profoundly? But after all, their wit and their apparent levity are but questions of style, and, Buffon to the contrary, the style is not the man. We have too often failed to realize that a Frenchman could convey with a jest what a German would propound with a metaphysical system: the kinship is closer than we imagine between Luther and Rabelais, between Voltaire and Kant, between Hegel and Renan. The French are not addicted to eternal jesting, nor are the Germans doomed to everlasting profundity. Styles pass away: not the word, but the thought, is the thing: or shall we say—not the thought, but the deed?

§ 2. LANGUAGE.

The safest criterion of nationality is *language*. A man carries his own frontiers with him: wherever he cannot be understood he is not at home. In a sense, whoever speaks French as his mother tongue is French; whoever can speak French at all is partly French. This test would annex to Greater France 3,000,000 Belgian Walloons, 800,000 "Romand" Swiss, and a few Italians of the valley of Aosta. It would bring back to France the province of Quebec, a few streets in New Orleans, a few villages in the rest of Louisiana, Mauritius, some of the smaller West Indies, and the black republic of Hayti. On the other hand, it would cut out the Flemings of the Hazebrouck district, in Northern France, who speak a Dutch dialect; the West

Bretons, whose mother tongue is Celtic; the Basques in the Pyrenees, who are using a curious agglutinative language, possibly the most primitive in Europe, whose affinities are still baffling philologists; and a majority of the Alsatians, whose *patois* is unmistakably Germanic. It should be added that there are now several hundred thousand pure Germans under the French flag.

Standard French is spoken by the common people along the middle course of the Seine and of the Loire, in all the larger cities, and by the educated everywhere. This standard French or Francian was originally a northern dialect; throughout the south it is still a superimposed, official language. In nearly one-third of France even the middle classes use for daily intercourse *patois*, which are forms of the old Langue d'Oc. Mistral and his friends, in the nineteenth century, have revived the great tradition of Provençal literature. Within that southern sphere the dialect of Roussillon is Catalonian rather than Provençal; those of Nice and Corsica are closer to Italian. These linguistic differences, however, do not mar the unity of the French nation. The minor tongues are not officially encouraged: but neither are they persecuted in the way Polish, Danish, and French used to be by Imperial Germany. There is no talk of secession; and there is no thought of annexing Southern Belgium or Western Switzerland because they happen to speak French.

We may note that French is extensively used by people who have never lived under the French flag nor belonged to the French race: before the war there was more French spoken in Beyrouth, Constantinople, Salonika, and Bucarest than in all the huge colonial dominions of France, except Algeria, Tunis, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Reunion.

§ 3. ETHNOLOGY.

Another way of defining a nation is by giving its ethnic formula—the list of the elements which, in the course of history, have contributed to its formation. As the Gauls, the Romans, and the Franks have in turn held sway in France, the French must be a blend of the three—Gallo-Romano-Franks. Unfortunately, this simple formula is vague and misleading. The Gauls were not aborigines, but late invaders, and a minority: furthermore, we do not know for certain what race they belonged to. They were "Celts" of course, but good authorities assert that the primitive Celts were closely related to the Teutons. The Romans formed an extremely small element, only part of which was of Roman blood. Their soldiers were soon recruited from the whole Empire, and even from the Barbarians assailing the border; their traders came mostly from the east. The Franks proper were a few thousand. It is obvious that the obscure and long-continued process of infiltration affects the destinies of a race much more than the dramatic accident of invasion. Before the Franks, the Romans, the Gauls, there lived in France Iberians and Ligurians. And before them? Unnamed tribes, cave and lake dwellers, the Crô-Magnon, the Neanderthal races. . . . All these elements are now hopelessly mixed: throughout the course of French history there is no sign of a race prejudice checking this process of amalgamation. France has been a melting-pot for over two thousand years of recorded history, and for untold centuries before.

Even if we knew the exact race and numbers of the different invaders, this would not provide an infallible clue to the present composition of the French people; for the proportion between the racial elements never remains the same. There is a process of selection which, unfortunately, does not always give the victory to the stronger or better race, but to the one best adapted to a certain habitat. Supposing that, for certain climatic or social reasons, one race should have a slightly higher birth-rate, or a lower death-rate, than the others: it would steadily gain ground, and, in a millennium or two, practically absorb the rest. If you consider that France has been inhabited for perhaps a thousand centuries, Gauls, Romans, and Franks are of yesterday; and it is conceivable that the earlier races, which had, as it were, become part of the soil, are relentlessly absorbing the new-comers. The origin of the dominant element in France, if this view were correct, should be sought, not in history, but in pre-history.

More probable still is the theory that, on account of constant intermarriage, very distinct changes in climate, and very radical changes in the material conditions of life, an entirely new breed is being evolved, which may or may not attain to the definiteness and fixity of a species. According to the first hypothesis, the main traits of the French people were determined in the Stone Age; according to the second, there is no French people yet: it is still in the making. The two conceptions are not irreconcilable. But if there is to be a "coming race," it will be European rather than French; the range of climate in Western Europe is too small, the levelling influences of civilization too potent, to make the evolution of a distinctly French sub-species at all probable.

§ 4. ANTHROPOLOGY.

If, without reference to origins, we study the present population of France in its physical characteristics, we find, as geography would lead us to expect, all the races of Europe represented, and a decided difference between the rich basins and the barren uplands.

In the determination of race, anthropologists rely mainly upon three criteria: stature; colouring of hair, eyes, and skin; and the shape of the skull. The latter is defined by the cephalic index, or relation between the breadth and length of the skull, viewed from above. When the breadth is 75 per cent. or less of the length, the skull is long, and the type is called dolichocephalic. When the proportion rises above 80 per cent., the skull is broad, and the type is brachycephalic. For the intermediate proportions, the terms meso- or mesaticephalic are used.

Of these three characteristics, the most permanent would seem to be the shape of the skull. Stature is greatly affected by health and environment; colouring presents striking variations in the same family, and even in the same individual at different periods of his life. It should be noted, however, that according to the indications of the head form, the Jews do not form a single race; neither do the Basques. Yet both are among the most definitely characterized peoples on earth.

Now, most anthropologists recognize in Europe three main races. One, the Nordic, or Teutonic, which Linnæus called Homo Europæus, and Lapouge the Aryan *par excellence*, is tall, slender, fair-skinned, fair-headed, blue-eyed, and dolichocephalic. It is found in all its purity in Scandinavia. The second is generally slender, invariably dark, and also dolichocephalic. It varies greatly in size, being tall in Northern Africa and short in parts of Southern

Europe. Its centre is the Mediterranean, from which it gets its name; but it is supposed to form the substratum of the ancient British population as well. Between these two long-headed races there spreads over Russia, and the Alpine and Sub-Alpine regions (including Southern Germany, Northern Italy and Switzerland), a round-headed race, inclined to be short and stocky, intermediate in colouring, with a tendency to brunetteness. This, the most numerous of the three races, is called Alpine, Cévenole, and also, to make a very confused question worse confounded, Celto-Slavic.

These three races are found in France—the Nordic in Flanders and Normandy, the Alpine in Savoy, Auvergne and Brittany, the Mediterranean in the Aquitanian and Provençal south. In no other country are more than two of these races fully represented: France is therefore a racial epitome of all Europe. But this plain statement would not do justice to the complexity of the French population. We should add, first of all, two minor but extremely curious elements: the Basques, broad-shouldered and slim-waisted like the ancient Egyptians, with faces broad at the temples, and tapering into a pointed chin; and a group of peasants in Dordogne, fairly tall, long-headed, with broad faces, men who have been identified with the prehistoric Crô-Magnon race.[1] Then the combination of traits is not always in harmony with the ideal types defined by anthropology. The inhabitants of Burgundy and Alsace, for instance, are darkish and round-headed like the Alpines: but they are also tall, which is the joint result of an admixture of Teutonic blood and of the fertility of their provinces. The Bretons are stocky, round-headed, frequently dark-haired: but their eyes are blue—a Nordic trait. The great majority of the French belong to a strongly Teutonized Alpine stock. This type is undistinguishable from the similar population of Southern and Western Germany.

This racial definition opens up a number of fascinating problems. The mixture of races, different, but not antagonistic, is held to be the secret of the brilliancy of French civilization: all other leading nations, like Italy, Germany, and particularly England and the United States, are also the result of such a mixture. Pessimists, like Vacher de la Pouge, see France slowly sinking under the curse of the hybrid,—barrenness ; optimists take comfort in the thought that, since there is no French race at all, it cannot die. Imaginative writers have elaborated a whole system of sociology on the basis of the cephalic index, and consigned the round-heads to irremediable inferiority. This is positively amusing, in view of the fact that the Australian aborigines, the most degraded of the living races of mankind, are more dolichocephalic than the purest Teutons ; whilst Henry Poincaré, a mathematician of commanding genius, "voyaging through strange seas of thought alone," had an extremely broad skull. The "anthroposociologists" deplore the gradual elimination of the noble, individualistic, Teutonic element, the "passing of the great race," which leaves a free field for the passive, socialistic, servile Celto-Slav.

---

[1] The Crô-Magnon type is also found among the Berbers of Northern Africa.

We cannot too strongly warn students of French civilization against such hasty and pseudo-scientific generalizations. Even the fact, so often accepted as axiomatic, that the aristocracy of Europe is in the main Teutonic is open to question. H. S. Chamberlain, Teutonic though he be, states that the British nobility offer a large percentage of brown eyes, the sign of their Norman-French origin. We shall discuss, in connection with the Barbaric invasions, the aristo-Frankish theory. That the infinite variety of French types is originally due to racial differences can hardly be controverted. But, at the present day, there are causes which operate much more obviously than race. Physical surroundings, first of all. A Frenchman may never discover whether a fellow-countryman is a Celto-Slav or a Teuton ; but he will soon find out whether he was brought up in a city or in the country, and in which province. Then professional and social differences : soldiers, sailors, scholars and priests, labourers and clerks, have much in common with the men engaged in the same occupation all the world over. Last, but chief of all, the individual temperament, which has not yet been safely reduced to collective rules : for there is patience even in the south, and excitability even in placid Flanders. The French are blissfully unconscious of any political or class distinctions based on the cephalic index. Dolichos and brachys have an equal chance. Whoever feels himself French is French, whether his name be Kleber or Scherer, Gambetta, Brazza, Zola, or Gallieni, McDonald, McMahon, Thompson, Bergson, or Archdeacon, Metchnikoff, Novicow, Zyromski, or Strowski. *France is not a race, but a habitat, a tradition and an ideal.*

§ 5. PSYCHOLOGY.

The definition of the French people, therefore, should be psychological and moral rather than physical. Such a definition has been attempted over and over again, and we trust that the reader is already familiar with the excellent studies of Brownell[1] and Alfred Fouillée.[2] All observers agree upon a few traits: the cheerfulness, and also the nervousness, of the French temperament; the insistence upon social rather than individual standards; the love of logical simplicity in government, art, and thought. All this is not strikingly untrue. It is the conception that the French have of themselves, and therefore it is at least a factor in their character. But the finest books on collective psychology leave an impression of incompleteness, and especially of arbitrariness. To describe the French soul we should heap up contradictory statements. We should have the patient labour of the Benedictines by the side of the flippancy of Parisian journalism; the dull, invincible plodding of peasant and artisan by the side of the fickleness of fashion; eleven regimes in eighty-two years, but a whole millennium under the same dynasty; the destructive scepticism of Montaigne and Voltaire, and the ardent mysticism of Pascal; naturalism, laughing broadly with Rabelais, and morose with Zola; the *Fais que vouldras* of Thélème, echoed by Anatole France, and the asceticism of Calvin and the Jansenists; the perfection of common sense in Boileau, and the wild, pregnant prophecies of the Utopian socialists, Saint-Simon and Fourier; the ideal of classic restraint in Racine, and the weird, titanic romanticism of Hugo in the fifties, "cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears;" Saint Louis, as well as Henry III; Joan of Arc, as well as Madame du Barry; and, to come to things that our eyes have seen, the battle of the Marne two months after the Caillaux scandal.

There is no nation in which all vices and follies are not abundantly represented, and no nation would be truly great in which any single element of greatness were wholly lacking. We cannot get a true picture of France, England, Germany, America, except by accumulating all-embracing contrasts. Yet the four pictures would not be identical. Two elements would strike us in the image of France. First of all, that quality of equilibrium that Strabo ascribed even to the physical structure of the land. Then the conscious, the voluntary character of this equilibrium, implying qualities of analysis, logic, and restraint. The ideal of French civilization is therefore to subdue instincts, to conquer prejudices, and to enthrone reason in their place. But it is obvious that such an ideal transcends the limits of France. Thus did the French Revolution proclaim "the Rights of Man"; thus did Victor Hugo, the most popular of French poets, and the most patriotic, hail the coming of the Universal Republic, in which France would gladly lose herself; thus, at a supreme moment in the nation's history, did M. Clemenceau, the incarnation of France's fighting spirit, exclaim: "France, of old the soldier of God, then the soldier of Humanity, and ever the soldier of the Ideal!" "Nationalism," in the narrower sense, is in France either a fossil or an importation; the truest Frenchman is he who follows most fearlessly the pioneering tradition of his race, and proclaims himself a citizen of the world.

---

[1] *French Traits.*

[2] *Psychologie du Peuple Français—La France au Point de Vue Morale.*

BOOK II

ANTIQUITY AND THE DARK AGES

CHAPTER I

PREHISTORIC GAUL

§ 1. Importance of Pre-History in France.

It is not our purpose to give even a sketch of pre-history, except in so far as it throws light on later problems. The one essential service of history is to restore to man, absorbed in his little concerns of the moment, a sense of due proportion—of the vastness of time, of the slowness of progress, of the transitoriness of much that is eternal in its own conceit:

> " My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :
> Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair ! "

Pre-history is even better fitted to teach the same lesson. The major part of the history of civilization should by right be what we call pre-history. How a Pithecanthropus assumed the habitual erect position ; how he learnt to use some rude natural tool—club or stone—to help the work of fang, fist, or claw ; the invention of fire—a revelation so momentous that most races have held it divine ; the dawn of government and religion, as evidenced by ceremonial burial ; the birth of art ; the beginning of agriculture ; the domestication of animals ; the discovery of metallurgy : these, indeed, are the essential facts in the growth of mankind. All subsequent progress had been but an elaboration of these primeval conquests, until the new era of scientific industry, which bids fair to transform the world.

The history of French civilization may be said to begin a thousand centuries ago—more or less. For that enormous period of time we have evidence of practically continuous occupation of the territory which is now France. Amiens is a thriving city to-day; it clusters round a thirteenth-century cathedral; the banks of the Somme have seen the Franks, the Romans, the Gauls; in the suburb of Saint-Acheul were found remains of the New and of the Old Stone Ages; and traces were discovered even of those infinitely remote times whose stone implements, although indicative of purpose, hardly reveal any sign of human workmanship. The fact that the names of French stations have been adopted to denote all the stages of palæolithic culture is not the result of French predominance in the Early Stone Age, but a tribute to the pioneer work of archæologists like Boucher de Perthes and De Mortillet. It shows, however, the variety as well as the antiquity of the origins of the French people. Several hundred centuries ago, as to-day, France was a country with a comparatively mild and equable climate; it was the place where migrating tribes from Asia and North Africa would meet, clash, or mix, and pass away, leaving a sediment of culture. Geographical forces were then at work, whose power is not spent to-day. Nor are prehistoric remains in all cases those of vanished races, without connection with the French population of the present; the strongly individualized Crô-Magnon type is found among peasants of the Dordogne region, in the very parts where the skeletons, implements, and works of art of their palæolithic ancestors were discovered.

§ 2. EOLITHIC AND LOWER PALÆOLITHIC AGES.

No European equivalent has been found for the famous ape-man of Trinil (Java), the Pithecanthropus Erectus supposed to have lived 500,000 years ago. The oldest inhabitant that we can trace is the Heidelberg man, whose powerful jaw is still ape-like enough, but whose teeth present certain human characteristics. He may have flourished as early as the second interglacial period.[1] Next we come across the Piltdown man, who was at first supposed to present another missing link between the ape, and what anthropologists are pleased to call *homo sapiens*. This

---

[1] The Glacial Age: A series of age-long oscillations in temperature, with corresponding extension and recession of glaciers. There were several *periods of glaciation*, separated by milder *interglacial* stages. The range of variation need not have been very great. It seems that France was never wholly covered by the glaciers.

Eoanthropus or Dawnman, as he was for a time called, may have made use of flint implements which he found ready to his hand, broken by accident into a helpful shape. But as it is almost impossible in such a case to discriminate between accident and design, the EOLITHIC period of human industry—the dawn of the Stone Age—is not established with scientific certainty.

We are on safer ground when we reach the finds of flint instruments unmistakably chipped and flaked so as to produce a cutting edge. These characterize the PALEOLITHIC or Old Stone Age. The most primitive types are known as *Chellean*, from the station of Chelles-sur-Marne, near Paris. The main product of Chellean industry is an omnibus tool, offering the unbroken natural roundness of the stone as a handle, and used as a hatchet, a knife, and a scraper. In *Acheulean*[1] and *Mousterian*[2] times, over a period of perhaps 50,000 years, the technique of chipping flint progressed considerably. To the earlier "handstone" or coup-de-poing of Chelles were added scrapers and planing tools, drills and borers.

The Neanderthal Race.

What kind of human beings were they who left these traces of their rude industry? These men of the lower palæolithic belonged to races unmistakably human, yet still ape-like in some of their traits, and best represented by the Neanderthal type. An enormous head over a short, thick-set body; a receding forehead and practically no chin; a powerful jaw, and, to compensate the strain, a bony ridge over the brows; arms curiously short in proportion to the legs; knees constantly bent forward; back and neck also curved; and, judging from the structure of the lower limbs, a slow, ungainly gait: such were the Neanderthals. We are thankful to know that anthropologists frown on the suggestion that they may have left any descendants among us. No trace of agriculture or pastoral life: these men lived solely by the chase; and we may wonder at the apparent inadequacy of their small stone weapons to cope with the tremendous fauna of those days—southern mammoth, hippopotamus, straight-tusked elephant, rhinoceros, sabretooth tiger. Their chief method of capture must have been the pitfall. The Neanderthals were barely human in appearance: yet they had already taken a few decisive steps. There are evidences, in late Acheulean times, of the use of fire. The arrangement of the bones seems to bear testimony to some kind of ceremonial burial: and this implies the dawn of religious ideas.

---

[1] From St.-Acheul, near Amiens, Somme.

[2] From Le Moustier, Peyzac, Dordogne.

This Lower Palæolithic Age began during a period of warm climate—probably the third interglacial stage. Gradually an arid, *steppe* climate prevailed, driving away the hippopotamus and the southern mammoth, whilst the elephant and the rhinoceros persisted. Then the full *tundra* regime set in, cold and moist, and brought about the disappearance of these animals also. The reindeer, the woolly mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, were the kings of that arctic fauna. This increasing severity of climate may have caused the degeneracy of the Neanderthals; perhaps the last of them perished, driven into barren regions by a stronger race, or killed in battle by invaders who may have known the use of bow and arrow. With their disappearance, during the fourth and last great period of glaciation, the Lower Palæolithic Age comes to a close.

§ 3. UPPER PALÆOLITHIC—THE CRÔ-MAGNON RACE.

Then came upon the stage men not essentially different from ourselves—erect, taller than the average Frenchman of to-day, with finely developed heads and a cranial capacity that would meet our modern standard. They are known as the Crô-Magnon race, from the cavern in Dordogne where their remains were first identified. Their skulls offer some striking peculiarities; seen from the top, they are long (dolichocephalic), but the faces, which normally should be long also, are broad. The cheek-bones are prominent; the chin well-formed; the brow rugged, but not repulsively so. Their appearance, as reconstituted, is not only absolutely human, but far from displeasing. We have alluded before to the strange fact that, in that very region of Dordogne, there lives at the present day a group of French peasants who present the same unusual traits, and the identity of this type with the prehistoric Crô-Magnon is generally accepted. These modern Crô-Magnons are found sporadically in other parts of Europe and among the Berbers of North Africa.

This last fact is of great significance. It seems difficult to admit that the Crô-Magnon type was evolved in Western Europe out of the Neanderthal, and the hypothesis of a migration from the mother-continent, Asia, is more tempting. In that case this migration may have taken place along the southern shore of the Mediterranean and through Spain.

The Crô-Magnons arrived during the Post-Glacial Age, when the climate was still sub-arctic. The reindeer remained the most typical representative of the tundra fauna, and its name is sometimes given to the whole period. Grottos were sought for shelter, although these palæolithic Frenchmen cannot properly be called cave-dwellers.

This Upper Palæolithic stage of culture is itself divided into sub-periods, named after the stations of Aurignac, Solutré, la Madeleine, Mas-d'Azil, and La Fère-en-Tardenois. There is no sign as yet of agriculture or domestication. The chipping and flaking of flint reached a high degree of perfection, and, in Magdalenian times, bone was worked into needles, borers, scrapers, and fish-hooks with remarkable skill. Most wonderful of all are the first steps in art, during the Aurignacian and early Solutrean periods. Drawing, carving, and even polychrome painting were practised. The human figure was seldom attempted, and when it was the result was grotesque, perhaps purposely so. Little statuettes of the female figure may have been idols; decorated staffs cut out of reindeer horn are supposed to be emblems of command; the depicting of animals revealed great powers of observation. These Upper Palæolithic works of art show how varied the fauna of Western Europe was at that time: animals of the tundra, the steppe, the mountain, the meadow, and the forest, now widely scattered, were all flourishing on the present territory of France. It is strange that these men should have crawled into the most inaccessible recesses of their caves, and there, by the light of some animal grease burning in a stone cup, drawn their elaborate representation of animal life with a realistic sense and a sureness of touch indicative of long practice. This can hardly be explained except through the association of art with some form of religious worship.

This curious Upper Palæolithic culture went the way of all flesh. Art disappeared from among the Crô-Magnons. The race itself seems to have become stunted. At the close of the period several new races appeared in Western Europe: one round-headed,[1] another long-headed, but different from the Crô-Magnon, and possibly the prototype of the present Mediterranean race.[2] For the first time do we find that co-existence of various races which was to become one of the dominant traits of European history.

§ 4. NEOLITHIC.

The next step in culture is known as the Neolithic, or New Stone Age, characterized by the introduction of the polished stone, and its gradual substitution for the older method of chipping. This comparatively small difference is but the inadequate symbol of a radical change in civilization—so radical that some archæologists have asserted the existence of an hiatus between the disappearance of the old and the coming of the new races.

Europe passed from the last post-glacial period, still sub-arctic in character, to climatic conditions very similar to those of the present day. The tundra fauna emigrated northward, or vanished altogether; the Alpine species, like the ibex or wild goat, and the chamois, were confined within their present habitat; the lion had emigrated to Africa. The bison, the long-horned urus, the stag, the moose, the wild boar, the forest horse, the Celtic horse, were still plentiful. The rude beginning of agriculture can be traced; sedentary life gradually superseded nomadism; there are evidences of domestication of the dog, and later of the horse, the ox, and the pig. Pottery was known, and the weaving of flax. The burial customs leave no doubt as to the existence of religious ideas. Art is no continuation of the Crô-Magnon forms. Some frescoes representing hunting scenes have been dated back to the Early Neolithic period. The animals in it are not treated with the same spirited naturalism as by the Aurignacian artists. But there is some attempt at composition, and the human figure is both more frequent and more successful.

France has kitchen-middens[3] like those of Denmark, lake-dwellers' cities like those of Switzerland,[4] and mound-graves or tumuli like all the rest of Europe. But the most interesting of all the prehistoric remains that belong to the Neolithic and to the Bronze Ages are the huge stone monuments or megaliths, long supposed to be associated with the religious life of the Celts, and for that reason called Druidical. It is now certain that they antedate the Celtic invasions of Western Europe. As they were found in large numbers and in a good state of preservation in Brittany, they are still known under their local Celtic names. A menhir or peulvan is a standing stone. That of Locqmariaker, now fallen and broken, was seventy feet high. They were probably memorial stones, unconnected with either burial or worship. Cromlechs are circles of menhirs. Dolmens look at present like large tables—one flat stone lying on top of two standing ones. But the dolmens were originally artificial caves; their sides were closed with smaller stones, and the whole covered with a mound of earth. They were used as burying-places, concurrently with natural or dug-out caves, when these were found available. The most famous assemblage of megaliths in France is at Carnac in Brittany. But we meet them in all parts of the land, and place-names such as Le Gros Caillou and Pierrefitte [1] prove that they must have at one time been even more numerous. The transportation of such enormous blocks, in certain cases for a distance of several miles, and to a point higher than their original location, must have involved immense difficulties. This reveals the existence of a society so strongly organized that thousands of men could be compelled to toil wearily and long, so that the pride of some chief might be satisfied. Another sign of advancing civilization is the existence of specialized workshops, manufacturing in quantities one particular kind of tool or weapon: this, of course, supposes a system of barter. Skeletons show the trace of compound fractures which had been healed: this proves a certain degree of medical skill, and of solidarity among the members of the tribe or clan, who must have fed and nursed the wounded man.

---

[1] Ofnet, Bavaria; Furfooz, Belgium; Grenelle, Paris.

[2] Ofnet, Bavaria.

[3] Prehistoric refuse-heaps.

[4] In Savoy.

§ 5. Bronze and Iron Ages.

We have seen how the passing from the Lower to the Upper Palæolithic, and again from the latter to the Neolithic, seemed to imply a break or a jump in the cultural history of Europe: one race, one civilization, had apparently completed their course, and now a new element had come in from afar. Whether a similar revolution took place at the beginning of the Bronze Age is still an unsolved problem. On the one hand, bronze implements did not come as a sudden revelation or as an importation, with an entirely different race and a new culture. The transition from polished stone to bronze is gradual; the two materials were used concurrently for a while, and the earliest bronze objects reproduced pretty faithfully the shape of their stone models. One of the elements of bronze, tin, was exploited in the earliest historic times in the Cassiteridæ, i.e. Cornwall and the Scilly Islands. If this was indeed the source of supply for the Phenicians and the Egyptians, bronze must have been known in Europe as early as 3000 B.C. On the other hand, iron, for all practical purposes the more desirable metal, is more abundant and more accessible than copper in Central and Western Europe: why did not its use precede that of bronze? Furthermore, bronze is an alloy, and its production supposes an advanced degree of metallurgic skill. A copper age would logically come before a bronze age: yet there are in Western Europe very few prehistoric objects of pure brass. The designs on the bronze tools or ornaments show Oriental influences, and the bronze culture seems to be almost invariably accompanied by the custom of cremating the dead, which is of Eastern origin. It is, therefore, a mooted question whether bronze metallurgy in Western Europe is an indigenous development or a ready-made acquisition from Asia.

---

[1] The Big Stone, the Standing Stone: the former is now a central district, the other a residential suburb, of Paris.

Hallstatt.

As early as the second millennium before Christ iron began to be used concurrently with bronze, and in course of time it displaced the less practical metal, except for artistic purposes. Iron was first used for edging cutting instruments, then for reproducing bronze objects, and finally for direct and original creation. To this transitional stage the name of Hallstatt is given. Hallstatt itself, in a secluded valley of Upper Austria, is within forty miles of the famous iron mines of Noreia (Noricum), yielding ore of such quality that no tempering or smelting was necessary. The finds in

Hallstatt reveal a civilization immeasurably superior to the neolithic culture of the West, and not unlike that of the Pre-Etruscan period in Italy or the Mycenean in Greece. Traces of the Hallstatt culture are found chiefly in the parts now occupied by the Alpine or Celto-Slavic race ; and the temptation is great to connect the invasion of a new round-headed population with the introduction of new forms of civilization. Thus the race and culture of the Bronze Age are oftentimes referred to as *Celtic*—one of the loosest meanings of that long-suffering word.[1] As the practice of incineration is part of this culture, the type of men who brought it must remain a mystery. The few skulls found at Hallstatt are long : but the fact that these bodies were not cremated proves that they belonged to strangers, and we are left in darkness as to the identity of the genuine Hallstatt men.

La Tène.

One more step and we reach proto-history, the dawn of our own epoch. The station of La Tène, on the Lake of Neuchâtel, has given its name to a stage of culture characterized by the more extensive use and improved quality of iron. Bronze, however, was not discarded. This type ranges in date from 500 B.C. to A.D. 100. It appears in the Celtic domain, and its centre may have been Southern France or Switzerland. From that point it spread over all the parts of Europe which were not under the direct influence of Greece and Rome. In technical perfection, it is not strikingly inferior to the works of classical antiquity. The Germans, still in the Bronze Age, received eagerly from the Celts this La Tène culture, the diffusion of which coincides with the greatest extension of the Celtic Empire. "It was the great iron sword of La Tène which, in the fourth century B.C., carried through the ancient world the terror of the Celtic name."[2]

---

[1] For a discussion of the various meanings of the word "Celtic," cf. inf., p. 71-73.

[2] G. Bloch.

CHAPTER II

PRE-ROMAN GAUL—THE CELTS

§ 1. PROTO-HISTORY.

Iberians.

THE Celts are not, however, the first people that can be descried in the twilight of proto-history. The Iberians, whose name is still used to denote the Spanish-Portuguese peninsula, were represented in Gaul by the Aquitanians at the time when Cæsar entered the country. Their habitat was then restricted to the south-west, between the Pyrenees and the Garonne. But, according to a widely accepted theory, they had at one time covered the greater part of Gaul and of the British Isles. They belonged in all probability to the "Mediterranean race" of modern anthropology —dark, medium-sized and long-headed. The brunette substratum traceable in the population of the west of Great Britain, particularly the "old black breed" of Scotland and the majority of the Welsh, is thus explained by an Iberian ancestry. The modern Aquitanians are the Gascons: now, that word Gascon, or Vascon, is the same as Basque; and Humboldt has claimed that the Basque, or Euskarian, people were but the racial and linguistic remnant of the once far-flung Iberians. Although this theory has been stoutly combated, it is favoured by a number of excellent authorities.[1]

Ligurians.

The Ligurians, too, spread far beyond the limits of the province which still bears their name. In the south they joined the Etruscans; on the western side of the Alps they occupied the Mediterranean shore as far as Narbonne, and the whole of the Rhône basin. If geographical etymologies are to be trusted, they may have reached the basins of the Seine and of the Moselle. Their contribution to the composition of the French people is hard to identify.

---

[1] For the hypothetical mixture of Iberians and Gauls, ancient historians had coined the term Celtiberian.

Phenicians and Greeks.

Like the Greeks, and before the Greeks, the Phenicians had dotted the whole Mediterranean coast with commercial settlements, some of which can still be identified in Roussillon and Provence. It is claimed that Monaco is a Tyrian word Menouha, meaning a resting or stopping place, although the Greek etymology (monóikos) seems more obvious. The decline of Tyre favoured the expansion of the Hellenes. About 600 B.C. a company of Phocean adventurers from Asia Minor founded Massalia (or Massilia), the modern Marseilles. There they found a land-locked harbour of such dimension that, although reduced in depth and area by an age-long process of silting, it remained until the middle of the nineteenth century the sole basin of the most prosperous port in France. Three generations later, the bulk of the Phocean population left their Asiatic home, driven away by the Persian conquest; and, after a sharp defeat at the hands of the Carthaginians, many of them went to swell the number of the Massaliotes. Against Carthage, daughter of Tyre, and its successor, and against the Etruscans, Massalia had to wage long wars; but she more than held her own, and spread her sway over the southern coast of France. Common enemies drove Massalia and Rome into a long-continued alliance. The city retained its Greek culture with singular purity: Romans long resorted to her schools in preference to those of ancient Hellas. She preserved, also, her aristocratic form of government, without going through the usual phases of tyranny and democracy; her constitution endured, not only through the long centuries of independence, but for more than a hundred years after the Roman conquest. Her interests were maritime and not continental: her influence did not spread far inland. It is still the chief weakness of the port of Marseilles that it is not organically connected with its hinterland: railroads and the new canal have to bore through hills before reaching the Rhône valley. Conservative and mercantile, isolated from the main body of the

Hellenic family, Massalia did not make any original contributions to culture. The names best remembered in her roll of fame are those of navigators and geographers, Euthymenes and Pytheas.[1] Her works of art were in many cases imported from the Greek centres. In this respect, Marseilles reveals again her identity with Massalia: with twenty-five centuries to record, she had hardly any monument to boast of, until the days of Esperandieu, under Napoleon III. The rest of Gaul was later subjected to Hellenic influences, like every other part of the ancient world. Greek was the language of commerce in the Mediterranean, as well as that of philosophy and of the early Church. The "Syrians" who had such a hold on Gallic trade in Merovingian times were Byzantine Greeks: in the nineteenth century, through the operation of the same geographical causes which prevailed before Christ was born, the Greek colony in Marseilles was still both numerous and prominent. But on the whole, the direct influence of the Greek element in France remained small. If any resemblance can be traced between the ancient Athenians and the modern Parisians, the reason thereof must be sought elsewhere.

§ 2. THE CELTS.

The Gauls gave their name to the whole country, and were long supposed to have been the preponderating element in the formation of the French people. Vercingetorix is still a national hero, and the democratic revolution of 1830 was quaintly heralded as the final emancipation of the aboriginal Gauls from their Roman and Frankish conquerors. Facts do not tally with this simple theory. The Gauls, too, were invaders. Their origin, their number, their racial affinities, offer a series of baffling problems.

Ancient writers used the words Gauls and Celts interchangeably: the same confusion has persisted to our own days, growing worse confounded with the rise of new sciences. The word "Celtic" is employed in at least three different connections, which should be kept clearly separate in our minds.

In philology it denotes a family of languages, a receding group, of which one, Cornish, died only a few generations ago, whilst the rest cling for dear life to the extreme western coast of Europe: the western highlands and isles of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Brittany. The ancient Gallic tongue was a member of this Celtic family; but the whole country adopted the Latin language, and at present the bulk of the French people belong to the Romance-speaking group.

---

[1] We may also mention Favorinus, who, seventeen centuries before Jean-Jacques Rousseau, inveighed against the practice of hiring nurses for infants.

Race.

Celtic is also used as the name—one among many—of the round-headed, stocky, darkish race which spread from Russia, through Austria, Switzerland, Southern Germany and Northern Italy, to the Central Mountains of France and to Brittany. This race is also known as Celto-Slavic, Cévenole and Alpine. We have seen that it is supposed to have come from Asia, and to be associated with the new culture of the Bronze Age. This race is the most numerous element in Europe; yet but a trifling proportion of it—one-half of the Breton population—speaks a Celtic language. The other peoples of Celtic speech—the Welsh, the Gaelic Scot, and the Irish—are long-headed, and do not belong to the Celtic race.

Then, in history, the word is used as a loose synonym for Gauls, the people whom Cæsar conquered. The Gauls, however, were distinct from their neighbours to the south-west, the Aquitanians; in a more obscure fashion they differed also from the Belgæ in the north-east. The physical description of the Gauls by ancient historians is familiar enough: large stature, blond or reddish hair, blue eyes, were their dominant features. Now these are the traits which we generally associate with the Teutonic race; and, as a matter of fact, it seems that the ancient writers were unable to distinguish these northern Barbarian tribes from one another. There are modern authorities, even in Germany, who maintain that the Teutones, the companions of the Cimbri, defeated by Marius, were a Celtic people. On the other hand, Dr. Martin Bang claims that some of the references to the "Galatai" or Gauls in the east really apply to the Germanic Bastarnæ. The natural conclusion to be drawn from this chaos of opinion would seem to be that, in spite of linguistic differences, the Celts and the Teutons were closely related. This theory, by the way, is adopted by the Teutomaniac philosopher of history, H. S. Chamberlain. It enables him to claim for Teutonism all the achievements of the French as well as of all other European peoples.

Psychology.

It is curious to note the moral portrait that Cæsar has left us of the Gauls. Brave to the point of temerity, with a quick mind, sociable, communicative, fond of oratory, for which they showed a peculiar gift; boastful as well as brave, "fearing nought save that the Heavens should fall," unsteady, impatient, quick to discouragement and despair, with no sense of orderly rule and discipline: such were the Gauls about 50 B.C., and such, many French observers would confess, are the French to-day. Lamartine, abandoned by the fickle mob in 1848, exclaimed: "They are Gauls still." It might be well to remember, once more, that the "fickle Gaul" lived for a thousand years under the same dynasty, and continued, with unexampled tenacity, the same nibbling process of territorial expansion. "Sons of the Gauls" were those poilus who patiently stood their ground for fifteen hundred days, even when no ray of hope could be discerned in the threatening east. The so-called Celtic element in France—Celtic in language, or race, or both, like the Auvergnats and the Bretons—are noted above all men for their stolid conservatism. Did Cæsar's description apply exclusively to those tall and blond warriors whom he calls Celts, and who must have been first cousins to the Teutons? But if his character sketch is at all true to-day, it is true chiefly of the south, the basins of the Garonne and the Lower Rhône, peopled by the Mediterranean race, and showing few traces of Celtic influences. This is a striking instance of the caution with which the brilliant generalizations of national psychology should be used, especially after an interval of two thousand years.

§ 3. CELTIC MIGRATIONS.

Whence came those Celts who conquered Gaul? From the "hyperborean regions"—the Gauls who sacked Rome in 390 B.C. were still referred to as "Hyperboreans"—"between the Ligurians and the Scythians." In less poetic language, we may say that they reached as far as the North

Sea; the Elbe separated them from the Teutons, who were then inhabiting Jutland and the coast of the Baltic. More advanced in culture than the Teutons, they seem to have exercised for a time a sort of suzerainty over them: a few old Gallic terms relating to war and government have passed into the Germanic tongue. The barbaric peoples of the ancient world were but loosely attached to the soil. We soon find the Celts roaming over the whole of Europe. As early as the ninth century B.C. they had occupied and renamed Britain. In the fifth they moved westward, spreading between the Central Mountains of France and the Atlantic Ocean. Few of them went beyond the Pyrenees; some, however, found their way as far as Portugal. Half a century later we see the Celts sweeping southward, over Etruria, and as far as Rome, which they burned in 390 B.C. They withdrew and settled in the valley of the Po. About the same time another movement was taking place towards the east, and the Celts had their share of the spoils in the downfall of the Scythians. By the fourth century B.C. their domination spread from Spain and Britain, through Northern and Central Gaul, Northern Italy and Southern Germany, to the Middle and Lower Danube. The word Bohemia comes from the name of a Celtic tribe, the Boii.

The next great movement was the result of pressure from the Germans, whose turn was coming to stalk upon the world's stage. Celtic tribes migrated to the south-east, defeated the Macedonians, and besieged Delphos. About 240 B.C. a band of Celtic adventurers founded Galatia in Asia Minor, a state which long retained its independence. Either on their own account or as mercenaries, the Gauls were found on all the battlefields. But the decadence of the Celtic world was already under way. In the south they were checked and driven back by Rome. In the north they were pressed by the Teutons, who had already passed the Elbe and were reaching the Rhine. Gaul had thus to face Romanization as an alternative to Germanization; Cæsar or Ariovistus.

§ 4. THE CELTS IN GAUL.

Lack of Unity among the Cities.

Gaul might have victoriously faced this double danger had she presented a united front to her foes. But Gaul was a geographical expression, not a nation. Not only did the Belgæ, and especially the Aquitanians, feel themselves different from the other Gauls, but even among the Celts, there was no semblance of unity. Arriving by waves, at long intervals, and mingling in various proportions with the aborigines, the Celts formed in Gaul a number of local states—the "cities" mentioned by Cæsar, and between these there was no permanent bond. Some of the cities, as the result of conquest, were held in subjection by others, some were placed under a sort of protectorate. There were, indeed, confederacies, often extensive, but ever shifting, and never national in spirit or scope. The Arverni, the Ædui, the Sequani, were at the head of such temporary combinations. But these fought against each other, and did not scruple to call in Germans or Romans. It was the Ædui who, in 121 B.C., brought in the Romans to help them against the Arverni; it was the Sequani who later summoned Ariovistus against the Ædui. The Arverni, it is true, united for a while almost all the Celtic tribes under the leadership of Vercingetorix; and it has been surmised that under their hegemony there might be traced the lineaments of a Gallic nation in the making. But this remains one of the puzzling might-have-beens of history.

No Unity within the Cities.

Within these "cities" we find sharply defined classes. The aristocracy, or knights, with exclusive control of the extensive public domain, owners of slaves, and surrounded by numerous clients, enjoyed all privileges, political as well as economic. The origin of such inequality is probably to be found in invasion and conquest; but other forces were at work. The caste distinction did not run strictly along ethnic lines: there is no sign that the Gauls kept themselves rigidly apart from the original population. Among the clients of the noble warrior, some were his boon companions and brothers-at-arms, his *ambacti*, feasting at his table, fighting his battles, dying over his corpse: an institution as old and as widely spread as the human race, and which we shall find prevailing among the Franks. This powerful oligarchy formed a Council or Senate, which was bitterly opposed to monarchy as well as to democracy. In Cæsar's time few Gallic cities had a king. Vercingetorix's father was burned for aspiring to the royal title. In Gaul, as elsewhere, Rome took advantage of these dissensions, and found supporters among the aristocracy. The movement of resistance to Rome which almost fused Celtic Gaul into a nation under Vercingetorix was at the same time a popular movement, and Cæsar brands the supporters of the young Arvernian chief as "the rabble."

§ 5. Religion of the Gauls.

Little is known with certainty about the primitive religion of the Gauls. There is no first-hand document. The Druidical traditions have perished utterly. Their temples were natural places marked off only by ritual—lonely glades or rocky wildernesses; the buildings that may have existed were wooden structures which have left no trace. Although we find mentions of the "simulacra" or representations of the gods,[1] it seems that the Gauls had not fully reached the stage when men want to give their deities the form of animate beings. The Gallic statues that have survived belong to Roman times, and are the embodiment of Greco-Roman ideas. Thus we are thrown back entirely upon the testimony of the classical writers: and this testimony is not only vague and scanty, but even what little information it provides is unreliable. Cæsar tells us, for instance, that the Celts were "the most religious" (i.e. superstitious) "of men": but he belonged to a cultured age that would naturally scoff at the practices of a backward people. There is no reason to suppose that the Gauls were more superstitious than the Romans, whose every act was presided over by some god or goddess. On the other hand, we find allusions to the "lofty" doctrine of the Druids—a supreme God, the immortality of the soul. But this idealization of Druidism may be the result of another fashion: in a sophisticated age, like the Alexandria of Posidonius, there is a tendency to overpraise the purity of primitive cultures. Thus Tacitus's Germany is a satire on Rome rather than an objective study; thus the eighteenth century waxed quaintly enthusiastic over the virtues of the Hurons. The belief in immortality evinced by the burial customs of the Gauls seems to have been of the most ordinary kind: a shadowy continuation of the dead warrior's material life.

---

[1] These simulacra may have been the menhirs.

Then, the Romans, and Cæsar in particular, had a way of ruthlessly assimilating foreign deities to their own. In so doing they showed both the bluntness of their feeling for subtle differences and their sound political instinct. Romanize the gods, and their worshippers will be half romanized. When Rome came across a god who spurned a niche in her Pantheon, her doom was at hand. But these rough and ready assimilations have cast a thick veil over the true facts of the case.

Among the different peoples of Gaul, we find in common the worship of geographic deities—the spirits of forest, stream, and mountain. Springs and rivers in particular, the centres of community life, the visible arteries of the land, were the "mothers of cities and of gods." Divona in Bordeaux, Nemausus at Nîmes, were famous among fountains; no thermal or mineral spring without its god or goddess. There was a Dea Sequana, and Father Rhine was one of the supreme gods. Votive offerings of many kinds have been found at the bottom of sacred lakes. The majesty of isolated mountains, Puy-de-Dôme, Ventoux, Donon, gave them, too, a religious character; and the early German reverence for the forest found expression in the deification of the wooded uplands of Ardennes and of the Vosges—Dea Arduena, Deus Vosegus.

At times, gods and goddesses were grouped in triads: thus the "Mothers," whose homely worship, dear to the heart of common folk, outlived Roman paganism, and blending with other influences, survived as the belief in fairies.

Among the major gods, Belenus and Sirona were the Gallic Apollo and Diana. Other assimilations are less obvious. Cæsar tells us that the great Celtic god was Mercury, and in Roman times, up to the great invasion of 257, the sanctuary of the Arvernian Mercury remained the most famous and the richest in Gaul. But that Mercury or *Teutates* was not the Roman god of commerce and useful arts: he was the champion of light, the conqueror of Cernunnos, a god of the earth, of night and of death, identified with Dispater, Pluto, Serapis. The *Ogmios* mentioned by Lucian, the Gallic Hercules from whose mouth golden chains came forth, was probably a form of Teutates. So may have been *Lug*, the Irish god, and *Esus*, the terrible and mysterious warrior. *Rosmerta* was the companion of Teutates. *Tar-*

anis was a thunder god, like Thor and Jupiter. The hammer, found as a symbol on coins and amulets, may have been the attribute either of Taranis or of Teutates.

Chief among the sacred plants was the mistletoe, a symbol of immortality and a panacea, which the Druids gathered from the oaks with a golden sickle.[1] All Celtic rites were not so innocent: victims, enclosed in wicker hampers, were offered in holocaust to the Gallic Moloch.

§ 6. The Druids and their Culture.

The most interesting feature in the religious life of the Gauls is the existence of the Druidical order. Few peoples in antiquity have thus possessed an organized clergy. The Druids were a corporation, not a caste. Their initiation covered a number of years. They ranked with the knights among the nobility, and it is most probable that they were recruited exclusively from the ranks of the patricians. They formed a federation, we might almost say a church. They had a Supreme Druid, elected for life, and sometimes not without bloody strife. Once a year they met in solemn assembly in the land of the Carnutes (Chartres), which was roughly the geographical centre of Celtic Gaul. Their authority went beyond the domain of religion. Civil differences among the nobles were submitted to them, and even conflicts between cities. They wielded the terrible weapon of excommunication, individual or collective—a weapon known to classical antiquity, revived by the Catholic Church, and which may become a substitute for warfare in the world of to-morrow. Yet it is obvious that their arbitration failed to prevent the perpetual clash of arms among the Gallic tribes. They were entrusted also with the education of the young. They had kept the memory of the successive invasions of the land, and taught of an Elysium beyond the western seas. But their lore,—magic, astrology, and the poetic annals of the nation,—was in all probability not above the childish level of other primitive races. There were also colleges of priestesses, like the half-legendary virgins of the Isle of Sein, revered and dreaded of Greek navigators. There were bards, poets, and prophets, who, however, were held to be inferior to the Druids. The centre of Druidical teaching was not in

---

[1] The pretty British custom of kissing under the mistletoe at Christmastime is unknown in France.

Gaul, but in Britain, whither the novices repaired to complete their education.

The Druids seem to have played no part in the resistance to Cæsar. On the contrary, one of them, Diviciacus, was a trusted auxiliary of the Romans. But they may have inspired some of the later rebellions (Sacrovir). The Druids were gradually merged with the Gallo-Roman "sacerdotes." Their once aristocratic title was finally applied to rustic priests and magicians, who kept up some of the old rites for the benefit of the Celtic peasantry. Then they vanished altogether, to reappear only in the mythical mist of early Irish history.

A glamour has been cast over the Druids by the "Celtic school" in the middle of the nineteenth century, particularly by Edgar Quinet and Jean Reynaud. Most of this glamour is romantic moonshine: history must be resigned to sober ignorance. Yet it must be remembered that Celtic rites survived through long centuries, and that some have left traces even in our own days. Christmas, or the winter solstice, is not exclusively a Celtic festival; but it was celebrated by the Celts before Christ was born. On All Souls' Day Teutates judged the dead. The summer solstice was hailed with bonfires, still kindled on many country hill-tops as "fires of Saint John." Even in Paris under Louis XIV, and still later in the provinces, basketfuls of live animals were thrown into those fires—an attenuated survival of the Celtic holocausts.

§ 7. CIVILIZATION.

The classical terms *city*, *aristocracy*, *senate*, are apt to be misleading. They would evoke in our minds a stage of civilization not essentially different from that of Greece and Rome. As a matter of fact, the four or five million people who dwelt between the Rhine and the Roman dominions were still barbarians. Gaul was clad with thick and tangled forests, still haunted by the aurochs and the bear. The "towns" were mere *oppida*, like Bibracte—that is to say, rude enclosures on elevated places, used as a refuge in case of war; or else they were temporary market centres. Even the Avaricum that the Gauls refused to sacrifice in their effort to starve out Cæsar's legions must have been nought but a conglomeration of primitive wooden cabins.

The bulk of the population still lived on the margin of the illimitable forest: hunting and fishing were still their chief means of sustenance. Yet agriculture had made some progress; oats and rye were known; in the south the Greeks had introduced the vine and the olive tree, the Romans had brought wheat. The rivers, more abundant and more equable than to-day, thanks to the larger and denser forests, provided fairly easy means of communication. But it is rather unexpected to find the Gauls noted for their inventiveness in the matter of carriages: this does not tally with the current conception of their country as an untracked wilderness. They are said to have known, even before the Italians, the wheeled plough, and the use of marl and lime in the improvement of the soil. The Sequani waged war on the Ædui, because the latter obstructed their Italian trade in hogs: we are reminded of a phase of the Serbo-Austrian conflict.

Metallurgy was developed to a surprising degree, although the temper of the famous "great Celtic sword" was none of the best. Iron was wrought in Berry and Périgord, found in small surface pockets, which have long since been exhausted. Gold was extracted from alluvial sand, and silver from galena (lead sulphide). Silver-plating and tinning were practised. The Armoricans were already bold sailors. The industry and trade of the Gauls had passed the barter stage, and required the use of coinage. The first coins were of Greek origin, mostly from Massalia. The gold pieces of the Arvernians were clumsy imitations of Macedonian prototypes. Gradually, the Roman coins from Provence conquered the whole country.

The art of the Gauls was essentially barbaric. The reproduction of life, whether of plants, animals, or human beings, is conspicuously absent: all ornaments consist of geometric designs. The chief products of that art were weapons, arms,[1] and jewels of precious metals, enamels and paste. The Gallic nobility had jewellery, but no furniture. They affected garments of gaudy colour and bold design, all glittering with braids, brooches, bracelets, and necklaces. They wore drooping moustaches, and long hair which they knotted on the top of their heads or allowed to float, mane-like, to the wind. To enhance their reddish blondness, a sign of noble birth, they washed their hair with lime water; and we are told that Gallic ladies made their charms more striking by the use of chalk, vermilion and soot.

---

[1] No winged helmet, of the type described by the ancient writers, has been found.

The father had the right of life and death over his family; polygamy was practised, but only among the chiefs; and their wives and slaves were slain on their tombs. Even in those days the Gallic bride brought a dowry to her husband: a custom which an optimistic historian calls "a guarantee of independence."

Such was Gaul on the eve of its conquest by Cæsar—a region inhabited from time immemorial, and covered by layer upon layer of ethnic alluvions. Of these successive invaders, the Gauls were then the latest. They had not by any means gallicized the whole country; they formed but a minority even in Celtic Gaul; and that minority offered no political unity. Cæsar found himself in the presence of a complex population, still primitive and fierce, but alert, inventive, open to foreign influences: a people not inferior in aptitude to the classical nations, although far behind them in development. The government, religion, and material progress of the Gauls, incomplete as they were, make us feel that the race was ready and eagerly groping for a fuller civilization. It is idle, therefore, to regret that the Roman conquest should have checked the growth of an original Gallic culture—absorption by the Latin world meant to Gaul not death, but an accelerated evolution. Rome fulfilled the desires of the Gauls; it led them whither they wanted to go. And that is why, in less than a century, they caught up with their masters, and worshipped the Eternal City.

THE AMERICAN PRESS LIBRARY

CHAPTER III

ROMAN GAUL

I. CONQUEST AND ASSIMILATION

§ 1. CONQUEST.

FROM 200 to 191 B.C. the Romans, in their career of "conservative expansion," had conquered Cisalpine Gaul, in the valley of the Po; with the destruction of Numantia in 133 B.C. the subjugation of Spain was complete. Between the two lay the possessions of the Greek city of Massalia, an old ally of Rome, hard pressed by Celtic and Ligurian tribes. Rome intervened: partly in return for the help that Massalia had brought her during the Punic Wars; partly in order to make the land route to Spain safer; partly in order to carry out the colonizing scheme of the Gracchi and to tap the trade of Gaul. As usual, Rome came to assist and remained to rule. Thus was created, in 121 B.C., a new province of Gallia Braccata, soon called, after the colony of Narbo Martius, *Narbonensis*. This transalpine Gaul extended as far as Vienne on the Rhône and Tolosa (Toulouse) on the Upper Garonne.

From 113 to 101 B.C., vast hordes of northern Barbarians, probably Celtic as well as Germanic, the Cimbri and the Teutones, ravaged Southern Gaul, and threatened Rome herself. They were finally destroyed by the military genius of Marius; but the shudder caused by their irruption was not easily forgotten. The dimly known populations of the north were stirring; and the Celtic tribes of Gaul, divided against themselves, were unable to check their encroachments. The Sequani, harshly treated by the Ædui, had called to their help the German adventurer Ariovistus. The Ædui implored the support of Rome. But the Senate hesitated, and as though they were conscious of division and weakness in front of them, the Barbarians grew more and more arrogant and restless. The Helveti, unable to stand the pressure any longer, burnt their homes and set forth for a new abode, devastating as they went. It seemed as though the Cimbric invasion were about to be repeated.

At that time, Cæsar, after a brilliant and somewhat equivocal career, had just struck an alliance with Pompey, the greatest general, and Crassus, the richest citizen in the Roman world. As his share in the spoils, he received in 59 B.C. the government of Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, with extraordinary powers. He may have been conscious of the necessity of providing a bulwark against Germanic invasions: no scheme is too far-reaching for his imperial mind. But his more obvious and immediate purpose was to rival the fame of Pompey, and to forge the military instrument wherewith he could make himself sole master of Rome. He checked the wanderings of the Helveti, and drove back Ariovistus. He thus appeared in Gaul, not as a conqueror, but as an arbiter and as a liberator. He took advantage of the hostility between tribe and tribe, and, within each city, of the feud between the aristocracy and the people. But, in spite of his diplomatic skill and of his tactical superiority, the subjugation of Gaul proved to be no child's play. For eight successive years he had to renew his campaigns, scouring, either in person or through his lieutenants Labienus and Crassus, the whole land from Aquitania to Armorica and Belgium. Twice he found it necessary to cross the Rhine, and twice the Channel, although no permanent conquest of Britain or Germany was intended. Finally, under the leadership of a young Arvernian chief, Vercingetorix, supported by the popular elements among the Celts, there was in Gaul a semblance of national resistance. The campaign of 52 was stubbornly fought out. Cæsar captured Avaricum, the sole city that the Gauls had been unwilling to sacrifice; he suffered a check before Gergovia; but he succeeded in besieging Vercingetorix in Alesia. All attempts to break the investing lines failed; an army of relief was driven off; Vercingetorix surrendered, and five years later the hero of Gallic independence was executed by order of his merciless victor. 51 saw the final and ruthless subjugation of Transalpine Gaul. In Cæsar's own lifetime the romanization of Gaul was already under way, and the Gallic legion of the Lark [1] served in the ranks of the conqueror.

---

[1] The lark—*alauda*—was the national emblem of the Gauls.

This romanization proceeded almost without a set-back. There were partial insurrections, like that of Florus and Sacrovir (A.D. 21), in which the Druidic order, so curiously apathetic during the war of independence, seems to have played a part. Half a century later the shameful tyranny of Nero, and the anarchy which followed his death, gave the discontented elements a chance. A Batavian chief, Civilis, and a few nobles from Northern Gaul, Classicus, Sabinus, Tutor, led a rebellion which shook for a while the yoke of Rome. But there was no union among the cities; a congress held at Rheims refused to endorse the movement. So deep had Roman civilization already penetrated that the rebels themselves dreamt of a Gallic empire on Roman lines, rather than of a revival of the ancient regime. Sabinus claimed that the blood of Julius Cæsar was flowing in his veins. As soon as Vespasian's power was secure, his general Cerealis found little difficulty in subduing the revolt.

§ 2. METHODS OF ASSIMILATION.

This rapid and thorough romanization was not due to any large influx of Roman blood. Only Narbonensis received a fair number of Roman settlers. In that province we find no less than six Roman and twelve "Latin" colonies. In the rest of Gaul there were at the beginning of the empire only three colonies, Lyons being by far the most important. Cologne was added under Claudius, then Trêves, but their number grew slowly, and it is uncertain whether any except Lyons were Roman, or merely "Latin." Roman colonies were generally composed of veterans from the legions; Latin colonies, from the auxiliary troops. But even the legions were gradually opened to non-citizens and to freedmen of all races. As a matter of fact, military colonization introduced into Gaul far more Barbarians than Romans: many place-names in France reveal the spots where foreign mercenaries or prisoners of war (læti) were once quartered. The few higher officials sent from Rome did not form a permanent element; the trading class was cosmopolitan, and less Roman than Greek.

The true secret of assimilation is twofold. On the one hand, the Gauls had reached a stage of development when they could appreciate the superiority of Mediterranean culture over their own. On the other, Rome's policy towards the conquered was a masterpiece of sane, cautious, "opportunistic" liberalism. Roman citizenship was not imposed as a yoke, or suddenly thrown open to unassimilated, half-barbaric tribesmen, as full political rights were conferred upon the natives in French India or upon the freedmen in the southern states. Each Gallic city, whether "subject" or "free," retained its own municipal laws. But neither did Rome proclaim, as some modern colonialists are attempting to do in the cases of India, Indo-China, or North Africa, that between conqueror and conquered the gulf must remain impassable. Full Roman citizenship was held out to individuals and to cities as a privilege and as a reward; it was of their own free will, and not without due probation, that the natives sought to exchange their status for one which admitted them among the rulers of the world.

There were therefore in Gaul different classes of cities. The majority were "subject"; they paid a yearly tribute, and were submitted to the control of the Provincial Governor. Other cities were "free": the Governor had no jurisdiction over their home affairs. Certain free cities were known as "free and federated," which indicated that their autonomy was the result of a voluntary alliance with Rome: thus Massalia. In addition, there were "Latin" colonies, enjoying the economic, and sometimes the civil, rights of Roman citizenship [1] but not the political.[2] Finally there were "Roman" colonies, fully privileged daughters of the Imperial City.

Apart from the status of the different cities, there was a personal status: a Roman citizen, like Saint Paul, remained a citizen wherever he went. The magistrates of cities living under Latin law acquired full Roman citizenship. The same privilege was extended to the soldiers enrolled in the legions; and it was conferred liberally upon members of the old Gallic aristocracy. We learn from a curious speech of the Emperor Claudius that as early as A.D. 43 the Roman Senate had been opened to Gauls: freely in the case of the old province Gallia Narbonensis, more reluctantly in the case of the more recent colonies of Celtic Gaul, like Lyons.

---

[1] *Commercium*: rights relating to property and contract; *connubium*: relating to the constitution of the family.

[2] *Suffragium et honores*: right of voting and of holding office.

The Ædui, on account of their long-standing alliance with Rome, were confirmed in the right of access to the Senate.

As a step in a long evolution, an edict of Caracalla, between 212 and 217, extended Roman citizenship to all the inhabitants of the Empire. It is curious that such a momentous act should have passed comparatively unnoticed, and, on the whole, should have meant so little. The aristocracy throughout the world were already in possession of citizenship ; the new and illusory political rights brought no advantages to the lower classes ; and it seems that the edict was accompanied by a number of restrictions. But the trend of Roman policy is unmistakable, and its success beyond doubt.

§ 3. GALLO-ROMAN CITIES.

The Gallic cities modelled their government upon that of Rome. Even Massalia, proud as she was of her long Greek tradition, followed the example under Marcus-Aurelius. Everywhere we find replicas of the Consuls (duumvirs) and of the Senate (Curia). These local governments were decidedly aristocratic. Rome herself had long given up the rule of popular assemblies, and her best allies in Gaul had ever been the upper classes. The Curia, generally composed of a hundred members, was recruited exclusively from among the rich, and was practically an hereditary body. Municipal honours were from the first burdensome, but they did not become crushing until the third century ; as they were the sign of local prominence, and opened the way to higher distinctions, even to Senatorial rank, they were willingly accepted.

The character of the government changed with that of the whole civilization. The term " city," applied by Roman historians to the independent Gallic states, is misleading. The so-called "city" was, as we have seen, chiefly a rural territory, with a few oppida or fortresses of refuge, and temporary market-places. With the spread of Roman peace and prosperity, the city became what it already was in Greece and Italy : predominantly an urban centre. During the heyday of Gallo-Roman civilization, that is to say until the middle of the third century, the aristocracy and a new class of merchants congregated in the towns, which assumed an activity and a splendour hitherto undreamt of. It was then that the south of Gaul in particular was covered with monuments, many of which have survived the great invasions—basilicas, temples,[1] triumphal arches,[2] theatres,[3] and especially amphitheatres for the gladiatorial games.[4] For the water supply of these cities great aqueducts were built, the best preserved in France being the famous Pont du Gard. An admirable system of roads was constructed, paved with heavy slabs on a thick bed of mortar, lined with ornamental milestones, time-defying in their useful magnificence. The bath, the forum, and the circus became essential elements in Gallo-Roman life. Roman costumes were adopted—Rome, it is true, partly returned the compliment; the very family names were made to conform to Roman usage.

§ 4. GALLO-ROMAN RELIGION.

Nowhere is this process of assimilation so strikingly marked as in religion: for religion is as a rule the last stronghold of national conservatism. The Romans, thanks to their political rather than mystic turn of mind, were able to meet the Gauls half-way. They established between the gods of the two races a rough and ready correspondence. Thus it was taken for granted that the great national god of the Gauls was Mercury, and a colossal statue of the "Arvernian Mercury," by Zenodorus, adorned the sanctuary of Puy-de-Dôme. An altar erected by the guild of the bargemen of the Seine was found under the chancel of Notre-Dame in Paris; on one side it represents Esus, on the other Jupiter. In the minds of the faithful it was the same god under the Gallic *sagum* and the Roman *toga*.

This religious approximation went one step further: Romans and Gauls, living under the same wise and strong rule, worshipped in common the Eternal City, the Goddess Rome, and her divine ruler on earth, the Emperor. This cult was a form of good citizenship. In Lyons, the capital of Celtic Gaul, was erected an altar to Rome and Augustus, surrounded by the statues of the sixty Gallic cities. The native nobles became "flamines" or priests of Augustus. In order to associate more closely the lower classes with this civic religion, an order of *Augustales* was created which, in each city, combined the priesthood with the functions of street commissioners. Thus heaven and earth united to cement the Roman order.[1]

---

[1] Maison Carrée and Temple of Diana, Nîmes; Temple of Livia, Vienne.
[2] Orange. [3] Orange. [4] Arles and Nîmes.

When new cults were introduced from the East by soldiers, traders or missionaries, whether it be Mithraism or Christianity, no difference can be detected between the attitudes of the Gallic and the Roman elements,[2] so far, at least, as the upper and middle classes were concerned. Gaul had indeed become an integral part of the Roman world.

§ 5. Language and Culture.

The most complete victory of Rome was that of the Latin language. Celtic died slowly in the remoter regions: it seems that it was still spoken in the fourth century; but it died, leaving hardly any trace. Even Armorica was then romanized like the rest of Gaul: its partial reconquest by Celtic was due to later invasions from Britain. The Basques alone of the primitive populations preserved their own language in an obscure corner of the Pyrenees. Out of some ten thousand Gallo-Roman inscriptions, barely twenty are in Celtic. About four hundred and fifty words of ancient Celtic have reached us: out of these it is doubtful whether more than thirty have survived in modern French.

Education.

The upper classes learned, and attempted to write and speak, the purest classical Latin. The schools of Gaul soon became famous. Massalia, indeed, had long been a centre of Hellenic culture for the western basin of the Mediterranean, but it can hardly be called Gallo-Roman at all. The name, on the contrary, admirably fits Autun, where the sons of the Celtic aristocracy were initiated to the learning of their conquerors. The school went down in the disaster which befell the city in the third century; but Constantius Chlorus revived its ancient glory, and appointed as its head his secretary and friend Eumenius. Rheims in the north, and especially the universities of Aquitania, were the successful rivals of Autun. Thanks to Ausonius, who has left us intimate sketches of his colleagues, we are familiar with the school of Bordeaux. The curriculum —grammar and rhetoric—was based on the explanation of Greek and Latin writers. Sciences, philosophy, and, stranger to say, even law, were hardly taught at all in the schools of the West. The students were numerous, and grouped in corporations. Although scholarships were not unknown, the majority of the students belonged to the upper classes, and were qualifying themselves for an administrative career. The professors were richly paid—partly out of the public treasury, mostly out of students' fees. They enjoyed great social prestige; and they were occasionally called to the highest functions in the State: Eumenius and Ausonius ranked among the greatest personages of their times.

---

[1] This administrative religion went to curious lengths: Renan mentions, among the deities honoured in Gaul, a "Genius of Indirect Taxation"—Numini Augustorum et Genio Portorii Publici (Renan, *Marc-Aurèle*, p. 565).

[2] Cf. next chapter.

Literature.

This Gallo-Roman culture was brilliant, but without any spark of originality. Like its architecture and its sculpture, the literature of Gaul was Greco-Roman, but not Celtic. Trogus-Pompeius, the first of a creditable roll of writers, lived under Augustus, and is known to us mainly through Justin's abridgment of his *Universal History*: curiously enough, his point of view is neither Gallic nor Roman, but purely Greek. It is in the twilight of the Roman world, at the close of the tragic fourth century, at the beginning of the disastrous fifth, that the orators and poets of Gaul stand most distinctly before us. Both Ausonius and Rutilius Namatianus are glancing backwards, hardly aware, it would seem, of the travail and portents about them. Ausonius, poet, courtier, and professor, is an all-too-skilful versifier, and a master mosaist of classical quotations. But he has an amiable vein of his own, a quiet descriptive talent,[1] and there are happy touches in his sketches of family and academic life. He was a Christian, but his religion does not seem to have vitally affected his art and thought. Rutilius Claudius Namatianus, on the contrary, was a Pagan of the Pagans. He embraced in the same burning faith the crumbling religion and the threatened city. Never has the civilizing mission of Rome inspired a more ardent tribute of reverence and love. The Goths were near the walls of the capital; his own estates in Gaul had been ravaged; but still the poet hailed Rome as the eternal mistress of the world.

---

[1] Cf. his poem on the river Moselle.

Whilst the aristocracy was learning in the schools the language of Cicero and Vergil, it was a very different Latin that spread among the people: the rough, ungrammatical, slangy[1] jargon of soldiers, slaves, and traders, further clipped or twisted by the Celtic brogue. Thus arose, long despised, the Romance dialects, one of which was destined to become French.

Survival of Latin.

Under this form, altered almost beyond recognition—but who should dare to call it debased ?—Latin is alive to-day. But even classical Latin could claim that the news of its death is greatly exaggerated. It was not until 1539 that French became the language of royal justice and administration. We have to wait until 1541 for a theological treatise in French—a momentous one, Calvin's *Institution Chrétienne*; and nearly a century longer for the first work of pure philosophy in the "vulgar tongue"—Descartes's *Discours de la Méthode*, in 1637. Up to the seventeenth century Latin remained unchallenged as the language of science, superior education, and diplomacy. Until quite recently all official inscriptions were worded in sonorous and at times unintelligible Latin. Twenty years ago one of the two theses required in France for the Doctor's Degree had to be in Latin. It is still the language of the Catholic Church, in ritual, administration, and teaching. In the eyes of philologists the most promising scheme for a neutral, international language would be, not an artificial hybrid like Esperanto, but a boldly simplified, analytical Latin. Thus has the speech of a rude pastoral village impressed itself upon distant nations for nearly two thousand years.

---

[1] A few instances of slang in popular Latin: *testa* (pot) instead of *caput* (head); *perna* (ham) instead of *crus* (leg); *botulum* (sausage, black pudding) instead of *intestina*.

CHAPTER IV

ROMAN GAUL

II. Decline and Fall of the Roman World

§ 1. Decline and Fall of the Roman Power in Gaul—257–481.

Peace, prosperity, culture, such were the benefits that Roman rule had conferred upon Gaul. With all its faults—and they were glaring enough, even under Augustus and Trajan—this rule was infinitely better than the old anarchy; and it may be seriously doubted whether, until the nineteenth century, the world was ever again as well governed as under the Antonines. But two dangers had threatened Rome ever since the days of Marius: at home, civil strife, and the rape of power by the soldiery; on the frontiers, restless masses of Barbarians. In the third century the two evils reached a climax at the same time, and the majestic edifice rocked on its foundations. The Senate and the Army made and unmade emperors—shadowy adventurers who flitted across the stage, paid their donativum, and were soon killed by their own men. In 257 the Franks and the Alamans harried Gaul from the Rhine to the Alps and the Pyrenees. Treasures were hastily buried or cast into lakes; the monuments of two centuries of peace were destroyed; the sanctuary of the Arvernian Mercury, the pride of Gaul, was plundered and burned down. Rome, distracted by civil war, could barely defend herself: Gaul had to work out her own salvation. For sixteen years there was a separate Gallic empire, extending over the old Celtiberian West—Gaul, Britain, and Spain. An energetic leader, Postumus, drove back the Barbarians, restored regular government, repaired the roads. The fine gold coins minted under his reign, equal to those of the best emperors, are a sign of returning prosperity. He maintained himself on the Gallic throne for ten years; but the evils of the local empire were the same as those of Rome. In 267 Postumus and his son were massacred by their soldiers; murdered, too, a few months later, his successor Lælianus; murdered Marius, after two months; murdered the vigorous Victorinus and his son, in 268. A last effort was made with a civilian emperor, Tetricus: it was the army of Tetricus that ruined Autun, the academic centre of Gaul. Tetricus, discouraged, betrayed his own troops into disaster, and made his peace with the restorer of Roman unity, Aurelianus (273). In 275 Aurelianus in his turn was assassinated, and a new invasion flooded Gaul, worse than that of 257. The Barbarians roamed at will, entering, pillaging, destroying almost every city. The Roman historians are curiously indifferent to this cataclysm; but archæology enables us to measure its terrible character. When the cities of Gaul were rebuilt, they were smaller than the old, and they were surrounded by high walls of defence into which the fire-scarred fragments of ancient splendour had hastily been thrown. At the same period we first hear of the *Bagaudæ*, bands of peasants goaded into rebellion and brigandage: an evil which could never be completely suppressed, and merged into the universal chaos of the fifth century.

The decentralization and the other administrative reforms carried out by Diocletian served their purpose; the recuperative power of the Empire was not yet absolutely exhausted.[1] Constantine and Theodosius received, and to a certain extent deserved, the title of Great. But, by 400, all hopes of checking or absorbing the Barbarians had become futile. In 410 Rome herself was desecrated by the Goths of Alaric; in 455 by the Vandals of Genseric; in 476 the Western Empire came to an end with Romulus Augustulus; in 481, with Clovis, begins the new Frankish monarchy.

§ 2. Causes of Decadence.

Military.

It seems, therefore, that the first and last cause of the downfall of Rome is to be found in the attacks of the Bar-

---

[1] The administrative and military centre of Gaul was shifted to the north, so as better to protect the exposed frontier; Trier (Trêves) became the capital; and Julian embellished his favourite Lutetia Parisiorum, Paris.

barians: after five centuries of efforts, Rome, exhausted, succumbed. But this statement might convey a wrong impression. Rome perished from within, not from without. Her ruin was due to anarchy and demoralization rather than to military defeat. Up to the very last the long-perfected fighting machine was more than a match for countless hordes. It retained its superiority even when many of the soldiers under the eagles, and some of the generals themselves, were half-assimilated Barbarians. In 356 Julian, with thirteen thousand soldiers, few of whom were veterans, defeated an enormous multitude of Alamans. Stilicho, with 30,000, routed the 200,000 of Radagaisus. For twenty-five years Aetius, in Gaul, was victorious wherever he turned. The Barbarians had no sense of unity among themselves, and felt no reluctance in serving the Empire. A well-organized government could have held the Germans at bay, with the help of German troops. But how could Rome protect her immense borders when every general was heading his legion Romewards, in order to secure the purple; when the Prætorians massacred their newly elected chief, for no other reason but that they wanted another donativum; when the emperors, out of jealous dread, had their best generals assassinated, like Stilicho and Aetius? The senatorial oligarchy had broken down. The imperial regime inaugurated by Augustus rested upon an equivocation. A few strong and wise men were able to make that compromise between republican forms and autocracy a success: but autocracy was born of the Army, and soon the substance of power passed into the hands of the Army. In early times the legion was the citizenry in arms; with the enormous extension of the Roman Empire, men of all races and of all stations, even freedmen, were pressed into service, and an irresponsible soldiery ruled the world.

§ 3. Causes of Decadence.

Social.

This in turn is an unmistakable symptom of decay in the people's moral fibre: a virile nation evolves the regime it deserves, and does not allow its destinies to slip into the hands of Prætorians. Of the two parts of the Roman world, "Urbs" and "Orbis," the first was corrupt, the second lethargic.

There were still examples of dignity and virtue in the old Senatorial aristocracy. It clung desperately to the shadow of its ancient powers, and the empty titles of Consul and Prætor were sought after until the downfall of Rome; but it had no effective share in government. Some of the emperors were among the wisest and strongest men that ever reigned; even in darkest times there arose rulers of singular energy and ability, and even of fine idealism. But there were also madmen, weaklings, and degenerates, as well as common adventurers; and even the best emperors were powerless to check the decay which was spreading around them—this was the tragedy of the life of Marcus-Aurelius, and also of Julian. A large and corrupt bureaucracy; a plutocracy grown rich through extortion; a plebs degraded by free distributions of wheat, oil, wine, and pork, and brutalized by the gladiatorial games; the peasant proprietors crushed out of existence by the extension of the latifundia (large estates); the free artisan class unable to compete with servile labour, or chained by the State to oppressive hereditary guilds; and, as an active ferment of demoralization, an immense number of slaves from all parts of the ancient world: such had become Roman society.

In the provinces, and particularly in Gaul, the same causes had been at work. After the great invasions of the third century, the aristocracy had not returned to the cities, now confined and darkened by their new fortifications. They sought refuge in *villæ*, large isolated estates, self-supporting and capable of self-defence, the embryo of feudal principalities. This great landowning class, generally of senatorial rank, led, so long as their own particular district was not ravaged, a life of selfish ease and leisure. They were exempt by law from certain taxes, and the imperial collectors were kept from their gates by bribery, and if need be by violence. The free tillers of the soil, who had never been the majority in Gaul, had by that time disappeared; but the prevailing type of economy was not the latifundia cultivated as a unit by an organized army of slaves. The new regime was characterized by the settlement upon the land of *coloni*—either Barbarian captives, or freedmen reduced to that position of semi-servitude. For the colonus, prototype of the mediæval serf, was attached to the soil, and went with the estate.

In the cities the substance of municipal power had passed from the local magistrates to the *curatores* appointed by the Emperor. But if the authority of the *curiales* had waned, their burdens had increased. They were personally and collectively responsible for the taxes in their city. So curial rank became an hereditary curse fastened upon the Gallic middle class. Curiales attempted to escape from their "honours" by entering the Church or the army, or even by becoming coloni. Recreant magistrates were hunted down like fugitive slaves.

The economic and social system of Rome was therefore unjust and wasteful to a degree: but like the political regime, it is a sign rather than a cause of decay. A healthy body politic would have reacted against these evils, one and all; every one had been clearly diagnosed, denounced by the moralists, legislated against by the emperors. But the needed moral force was lacking in the descendants of the people who once had stood so pre-eminently for stern vigour. Was it, indeed, the same people? Was the downfall of Rome primarily due to the disappearance of the old Roman stock, exhausted by centuries of conquest?[1] War selects the fittest, and kills them off, leaving the inheritance of the world to the children of the weak. Perhaps the old Roman type disappeared through intermarriage with inferior races; at any rate, we know that it was flooded over by Eastern elements, clever and servile. "Greece conquered her rude conqueror"—but Greece was morally unfit to rule, and "the Orontes flowed into the Tiber"—a turbid Oriental stream of superstition, cruelty, and debauchery. Yet we do not believe that the theory of race substitution solves the whole problem. The evils which killed Rome existed under Marius and Sulla; and the corruption which Tacitus depicts was rife among families of old patrician blood. It is in the heart of Rome herself that the secret must be sought.

§ 4. CAUSES OF DECADENCE.

Moral.

Rome did not keep pace with her destiny. There was a fine spring of energy in the patriotism of the early Republic—narrow, intense, practical. But it could not survive in the opulent cosmopolis of a later age. There was generosity and breadth of vision in the humanitarianism of Seneca; but it remained oratorical and ineffectual. There was no bridge from the one to the other. From the moral point of view, "Urbs" did not grow into "Orbis."

---

[1] This is the theory of Seeck, *Der Untergang der Antiken Welt.*

Imperial Rome saw the rise of two great ethical systems, which are still alive to-day. Both failed to save her. The stiffly dignified, introspective stoicism of Marcus-Aurelius, on the one hand, was almost as powerless as the artificial synthetic Hellenism of Julian. Christianity, on the other hand, was, for the first three centuries, unknown, then despised and persecuted, and, of its very nature, indifferent to the destiny of Rome. When it conquered in the fourth century, the disease was beyond hope, and the physician himself was infected: the greatest Christian emperors, Constantine, Theodosius, later Justinian, were no less crafty, cruel, and immoral than the average of their Pagan predecessors. Christianity did nothing to check, and much to accelerate, the intellectual decadence which was so apparent throughout the history of the Empire. For after the Augustan age, the artistic, scientific, and philosophical mediocrity of Rome became irremediable. There were still orators, versifiers, literary craftsmen of no mean talent: but there was no life in them. Even Marcus-Aurelius can hardly be said to be an original or profound thinker. We have a culture of Epigoni, incapable of a new thought; a "classical" world if ever there was one, feebly interested in style as "a jargon of experts," and mumbling with senile obstinacy the outworn wisdom of its ancestors. Had the glaring evils of the central government been checked, had there been no Barbarians on the frontiers, it is still quite conceivable that Rome, incapable of further growth, would have been doomed to a living death. It would have sunk into the effete mandarinism of China. So true it is that life is a challenge forward, and that "one good custom will corrupt the world."

§ 5. THE HERITAGE OF ROME.

Is France a Latin Nation?

It is therefore not an unmixed blessing for a nation to be the heir of Rome; and of that heritage, France has received her full share. Not only is her language a Latin dialect, but her kings, from the close of the thirteenth century to the nineteenth, have made deliberate efforts to introduce Roman principles into French law; and those of her rulers who enjoyed the greatest prestige, Louis XIV and Napoleon I, were thoroughly imbued with Roman ideas. Bonaparte, indeed, has hardly left a monument or an institution that is not a Roman pastiche.

Some twenty-five or thirty years ago France went through a crisis of self-abasement which coincided with an outburst of pride among the Anglo-Saxons. "Latin" at that time became a term of reproach, and the influence of Rome was held to be a curse. The "Latin" nations, of which France was the type, were accused of sacrificing, in every domain, individuality and natural growth to order and logic. Their law was based on abstract principles rather than precedents; their religion was centralized and formal, leaving little or no room for independent interpretation or mysticism; their government was, at its best, paternal, at its worst, tyrannical, but always claiming unlimited authority, always based on the ideas of uniformity and compulsion, always averse to local traditions, personal initiative and voluntary association; their morality relied upon honour rather than conscience; it was a code of good manners and a set of police regulations, which broke down entirely in individual relationships, like those between the sexes. Their art was essentially classical—an art of symmetry and restraint, favourable to oratory and to certain dignified forms of architecture, but deadly to genuine lyric poetry. Their philosophy, finally, was a shallow, deductive rationalism, weak on the intuitive and experimental sides. Hence, in spite of superficial brilliancy, a universal mediocrity, a gradual emasculation which meant decadence, and assured the ultimate triumph of the liberty-loving, adventurous Anglo-Saxon.

These strictures may have been deserved; and the connection between the faults of France and her "Latin" origin may not have been wholly fanciful. But the exaggerated character of the theory is now apparent to every eye. For a decade before the war three movements had been going on in European thought, all tending to a better appreciation of the "Latins." The first was a wholesome decline in British jingoism; the second a no less wholesome revival of French self-confidence; the third a realization of the radical differences between "Anglo-Saxon" and

"Teutonic" cultures. It is obvious at the present day that it is the Germans and not the French who represent the ideas of conformity and order, the subordination, if need be the sacrifice, of the individual, body and soul, to the collective purpose—the all-devouring *Staats-Gedanke.* In this respect the Teutons are opposed equally by the Celto-Franks and by the Anglo-Celts, south and north of the Channel.

Our purpose is not to establish any theory of our own, but simply to warn students against broad generalizations, delusive even when they contain a large element of truth. France is a "Latin" nation, if you like: but between Latin and Teuton, and especially between Latin and Anglo-Saxon, there is no such abyss as the political philosophers of the last generation would have us believe. *Roman* law, for instance, and *Roman* Catholicism, are intimately associated with the history of France. But, up to the close of the ancient regime, barely one third of France, the south, lived under "written," or Roman law; in the north prevailed "customs," or common law. If the ordinances of the kings were to a certain extent inspired by Roman principles, they were chiefly the products of circumstances, and were never forced into a system. The Napoleonic code owed its success to the fact that it was not based upon abstractions, but that it was an unphilosophical and workable compromise between French traditions, revolutionary legislation, and Roman precedents. The influence of Roman law is hardly less striking in Germany than it is in France.[1]

As for *Roman* Catholicism, there is no doubt that it has preserved to our own days, in such countries as France, the language, the spirit, the very administrative divisions of the Roman Empire. But we should not forget that nearly one half of the German-speaking population (including Austria) is more Catholic than France; that Calvin and the Huguenots have played a creditable part in the history of Protestantism; that the State churches of Sweden, Prussia, and England, although nominally Protestant, are hardly less formal and "conformist" than was the jealous Gallicanism of the French kings; and that the dominant influence in French culture has been, not Ultramontanism, but Free-thought—the natural development of Luther's call to emancipation. Voltaire had led a *Kulturkampf* long before Bismarck—and to better effect.

---

[1] We may add that Roman law itself was a growth, not a series of abstractions and deductions; it was not codified until Rome herself had fallen; and even the Justinian code is by no means a model of logic and simplicity.

Fifteen hundred years have elapsed since the fall of Rome. The world has gone through chaos, reorganization, decadence, a renaissance, a new decline, a new revolutionary birth, a new industrial and scientific era. Roman influence has become so widely diffused—and so diluted—that it is singularly hazardous to draw a line through European civilization, separating Latin from non-Latin elements. France, it is true, has received the rudiments of her language from Rome; but it was the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation that most consistently claimed Rome's political heritage, and the Kaiser was the last of the Cæsars. We are all the heirs of Rome: parts of the heritage we have squandered away, and parts we have increased many fold. France should not be singled out either for reproach or for praise.

CHAPTER V

CHRISTIANITY IN ROMAN AND FRANKISH GAUL

§ 1. ORIENTAL CULTS.

WE have already noted three steps in the religious history of Gaul. The first was Druidism: as an organization, it had all but disappeared. The second was the assimilation of the Celtic gods with those of the Greco-Roman Olympus. Then came the purely civic worship of Rome and of the Emperor. The last two forms of religion were closely associated with culture and with patriotism; this gave them a persistent hold upon large and influential elements in the Empire. Symmachus, for instance, in the latter part of the fourth century, was at the same time, and consistently enough, an old-fashioned senatorial aristocrat, a purist in style, and a scrupulous Pagan. These traditional cults implied the careful observance of a ritual, but no ardent belief, and no moral transformation. They were not incompatible with philosophy: Marcus-Aurelius performed his duties to the religion of the State with the conscientiousness that he showed in all things.

To these Celtic, Hellenic, and Roman elements were soon added Oriental influences. The world had been brought under the political sway of Rome; but it would be excessive to say that it had become wholly Roman. Rather had Rome herself, even in republican times, become cosmopolitan. Travelling was safe and easy in the Mediterranean world under the majestic imperial peace. Soldiers, officials, merchants, slaves, professors and students, missionaries, valetudinarians, men of leisure and fashion, were ceaselessly making use of the magnificent roads, or of the regularly appointed lines of navigation. Of these wanderers the best type, perhaps, was the cosmopolitan emperor Hadrian.

Greek had become the *lingua franca* of commerce and culture. Through the medium of Greek, Oriental rather than purely Hellenic ideas permeated the West: for the most active centres of the Greek world were to be found, no longer in Europe, but in Asia Minor and in Egypt. Greece subjugated, conquered Rome; but the East, enslaved, had conquered the successors of Alexander. Even the central government adopted in time the trappings and the principles of an Oriental monarchy.

There was, throughout the vast Empire, a yearning to escape from the limitations of its frigid, material, rational civilization, from the unutterable *ennui* that its splendid mediocrity was spreading over the earth. This desire explains the vogue of the Neo-Platonic philosophy and of the Oriental cults. A sharper distinction was drawn between matter and spirit, between the individual body and the soul, between the world and the Deity. The soul was clamouring for deliverance from the body of this death, for a return to God, its home. Such salvation could not be effected by the unaided efforts of human reason and will. Some direct contact must be established with the Divine Powers, through some act of penitence, cleansing, and consecration—some new birth that would open the "Path of Return." This "Path" the restless society of Rome, especially after the second century, sought eagerly in all the "mysteries" that were offered to its credulity: in the Greek traditions of Eleusis and Dionysos, in the Phrygian, Syrian, Egyptian, and Persian cults of Magna Mater (Cybele), Dea Syra, Isis and Serapis, Mithra. Persuaded that it was the same principle that all races were worshipping under many forms, unwilling to miss any chance of salvation, or to forego the tremor of a new mystic adventure, the same men and women sought initiation to several religions. They submitted to the disgusting baptism of the Taurobolium:[1] in a pit under the sacrificial platform they were covered with the warm blood of a young bull. Apuleius has left us a curious description of the ceremonies of Isis, the Goddess-Mother, who lighted the souls into the world beyond death. Many forms of the Isiac ritual are curiously coincident with those of Roman Catholic worship. The impressive initiation and communion of Mithraism, a sun-worship of Persian origin, seem to have been the symbol of a strong and pure message. Its elaborate freemasonic organization, its stern discipline, appealed particularly to the Legionaries, who carried it to all parts of the Empire. Mithraic inscriptions and monuments are numerous in Gaul: many of them are posterior to imperial edicts severely prohibiting non-Christian religions. This cult provided the bond of Julian's "Hellenic" synthesis. Had the growth of Christianity been arrested through chance or some inner weakness, the Western world, in Renan's opinion, might be worshipping Mithra to-day. And it opens an attractive field of speculation to wonder in what way the difference would have manifested itself.

---

[1] At first a Magna Mater, then a Sol Invictus, or Mithra, rite.

§ 2. CHRISTIANITY DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER ORIENTAL RELIGIONS.

Christianity appeared upon the scene as one of these Oriental cults. It sprang from the same region, in response to the same yearning. Neither in its miracles, mysteries, or ritual was it original or unique. Indeed, Christian apologists did not dispute the authenticity of Pagan miracles, or refuse to recognize the similarity between Christian and Pagan ceremonies; but they ascribed these puzzling resemblances to the ingenuity of demons. In common with the other Oriental cults, Christianity offered the attraction of its close-knit, voluntary associations of fellow-believers. These little groups were oases of brotherly love in the boundless spiritual aridity of the Empire. In rivalry with the other Oriental cults, Christianity satisfied the longing for mystic union with a redeeming power. We are not justified, however, in believing that its survival was merely the chance result of a struggle for existence with Mithraism and Isis-worship. These religions have not left us their full secret, and we must speak with diffidence; but it seems clear that Christianity had over them three decisive points of superiority.

In the first place, it, and its parent stem Judaism, were unique in their refusal to compromise with Pagan superstition. Other national gods had their statues in the Roman Pantheon. The best emperors erected temples to Sol Invictus, Magna Mater, Isis: Jehovah and Christ alone stood apart. The easy syncretism of religious butterflies may seem more liberal: in Judaism and Christianity there was unmistakable earnestness, which made them defy persecution and court martyrdom. By thus standing against the official religion of Rome, Christianity was better able to denounce the evils of the Roman world: its cancer of unchastity, the debasing cruelty revealed in its treatment of slaves and in the gladiatorial games, the hypocrisy of its formal worship. Through such an uncompromising attitude Christianity attracted many who were yearning for purity and gentleness. The only radical opponents of such terrible wrongs, thought the men who despaired of the Roman world, must be fundamentally right.

Radical in its condemnation, Christianity was also radical in its promises. It held forth the prospect of a new heaven and a new earth *near at hand*. This was just what a nervous and jaded world desired and did not dare to hope for. Such promises were for a long time the chief appeal of revolutionary socialism, even in its most extravagant form; such has been, for many, the fascination of war. Mere progress is too uncertain—at best despairingly slow: we want apocalyptic changes, and splendid rewards. The hourly expectation of the Second Coming has been disappointed through nineteen centuries: yet it is alive to-day. It has been the myth, the "vital lie," which has helped millions of men to bear more patiently the hardships, the mediocrity, the tedium of their lives. This belief, no doubt, undermined the vitality of the Empire. People ceased to take pride and interest in a vain show which was nearing its end. The strong and clean men who could have stayed the decadence of Rome fled to the desert, vowed celibacy, and, even when they remained in the world, thought of saving their souls rather than the State.

Lastly, whilst the idea of redemption through love was not absent from Oriental philosophies and religions, Christianity alone seems to have possessed a human, historical, tangible Saviour, a Friend to be personally cherished and followed. The legend of the thaumaturgist Apollonius of Tyana challenges, but cannot bear, comparison with the simple Gospel story.

§ 3. Christianity in Roman Gaul.

According to the legend which Father Lacordaire repeated in all seriousness, the three Maries—Mary Mother of Jesus, Mary of Bethany, and she of Magdala—were miraculously transported to the coast of Provence; if we were to accept a less shadowy tradition, Saint Paul himself had set foot in Gaul; and the monks of St. Denys cherished the belief that their patron Dionysius, the first Bishop of Paris, was none other but Denys the Areopagite. Without claiming such antiquity, the Christian Church in Gaul goes back to very early times, for the country was in close touch with the rest of the Mediterranean world. But for a long while it remained confined to the Greek and Jewish communities which were found in every centre of commerce. In 177, under Marcus-Aurelius, a cruel persecution brought the Church of Lyons into the full light of history: it was then still predominantly Greek, and it was already torn by heresies. French tradition still cherishes the venerable or touching figures of the martyrs of Lyons: Pothinus, the aged bishop; Irenæus, his learned successor; and especially the humble and heroic girl slave, Blandina.

There were other martyrs in the Gallo-Roman roll of fame: in particular, Saint Denys, who picked up his severed head and became, centuries later, the patron and ally of the Capetian dynasty. But Gaul suffered less than the Eastern world from the last and most cruel of all the persecutions—the one inspired by Galerius and named after Diocletian. Constantius Chlorus, then Cæsar in Gaul, Britain, and Spain, preserved an attitude of tolerance. His son, Constantine, was destined to open a new era in the growth of the Christian religion. In 312 he became its official protector, and under his reign took place, at Nicea, the first ecumenical council of the Church (325).

Julian.

A last effort to revive Paganism was made by Julian the Apostate (361–3). It is a mere coincidence, but a curious one, that the most insidious and the most respectable of Christianity's early foes should have been so intimately associated with the history of Paris, the future "Rome of Unbelief." [1] Julian's Paganism was something deeper than the formal civic worship and the effete mythology that are generally connoted by that name. He wanted to retain their cultural and patriotic associations, but also to infuse into them a new ethical and mystic spirit, borrowed from the philosophies of Greece and the religions of the Orient. The sun was to be the symbol of the one divine essence. Stoicism, Neo-Platonism and Mithraism were to be fused into a single doctrine, " Hellenism," for the preaching and service of which a clergy was to be created. But a synthesis of old fictions and new mysticism cannot be decreed by a single man, even though he be the Emperor of Rome. Julian would have wasted in the struggle his energy, and his undoubted nobility of soul. He perished in a campaign against the Parthians, and " the Galilean conquered."

---

[1] Julian lived in Lutetia, where he was proclaimed Emperor; wrote its praises; and adorned it with monuments, the ruins of which are still standing in the Latin Quarter.

§ 4. Triumph of Christianity.

Just at that time a soldier, Martin, later Bishop of Tours and founder of monasteries, waged effective warfare against Paganism. Numerous monuments of the old faith fell at his command, and he found enthusiastic imitators. When he died, about 400, the urban centres of Gaul and the landed aristocracy were, to a very large extent, Christianized. The conversion of the cultured classes was, no doubt, sincere: but these new believers clung fondly to their now meaningless mythology. Ausonius and Sidonius Apollinaris were still Pagans in literature—hardly more so, however, than was Boileau in the seventeenth century. Fourteen hundred years after Saint Martin had broken their altars of stone, Chateaubriand had still to dethrone the heathen gods from the temples of French poetry. The literary mind is tenacious in its worship of fallen idols.

As for the peasants, they remained attached much longer to their ancient worship: thus did the word *paganus* assume its present meaning. Perhaps Celtic Paganism was never fully eradicated. Born of the soil, possible before the coming of the Gauls, it survived, under Roman names, the fall of the Druids. When Christianity triumphed the old deities were whitewashed into saints, or degraded to the position of demons. The sun-god Belen, worshipped on the summit of mountains, had already become Apollo: he changed again and turned into Saint Michael or Saint George, resplendent slayers of dragons. Pilgrims kept flocking to the holy springs of old, perennially miraculous under a new invocation. The Golden Legend of Brittany, in particular, is a

Celtic Pantheon. Many rites of the Church are older than Christianity.

The Church and the Empire, once sworn enemies, became more and more closely associated. Each of the sixty-four Gallic cities became the seat of a bishop; each of the seventeen provinces[1] the seat of an archbishop or metropolitan. If the unimportant town of Auch still possesses an archbishop, it is because *Auscii*, some fourteen hundred years ago, had become the capital of Novempopulana. As Senones (Sens), not Paris, was the official centre of Lugdunensis Quarta, Paris remained until 1622 a mere bishopric in the ecclesiastical province of Sens. The Prefect of Gaul and the Primate resided in the same city—Arles, Vienne, or particularly Lyons. From the Empire the Church received many exemptions and privileges. Clerics were free from military service; they were also free from those curial "honours" which had become a form of servitude; for many offences the bishop, and not the civil magistrate, was their sole judge. After Constantine a great part of Church property escaped taxation altogether. These material benefits were perhaps more than balanced by spiritual evils. The Church found it hard to remain unworldly, when the pomp and power of this world were at her feet. The gains of the Empire were even more doubtful. The Christian emperors received the moral support of the Church; they were granted, in Church affairs, an advisory and supervisory position. They summoned councils and even presided over them. But, fortunately, the old identity between religious and political power was never fully restored. The Church failed to reform the crumbling State or to revive waning patriotism. Catholic historians, Montalembert, Broglie, Tocqueville, were forced to acknowledge, with amazement and regret, this lack of regenerative influence. From this alliance between the Empire and Christianity the Church of Rome was born. Through her the language, the geographical divisions, the costumes, the very claims and methods of the Empire are alive in the twentieth century.

As the civil government declined, the ecclesiastical drew to itself the substance of power. The giving of alms was in itself an important function in a pauperized world. One of the duties enjoined upon Christian ministers was to visit and relieve the prisoners; one of the privileges that had passed from the temples to the churches was that of sanctuary; this duty and this privilege gave the clergy an immense power in watching over, and if need be in mitigating, the administration of justice. The courts had become noted for their ruinous delays and their corruption. Christians resorted increasingly to the arbitration of bishops, whose judicial attributions, although not fully recognized by law, grew to be very extensive. Valentinian had sanctioned the creation of a new official, the *defensor civitatis*, whose duty it was to protect the people against exaction: the bishop became, in fact, if not in name, the veritable Protector of the City. For that reason his election, in which the people and the curia, as well as the clergy, took part, assumed a political character, and was not always free from intrigue or even bloodshed. In troublous times the duties of a bishop were those of an energetic and vigilant governor even more than those of a spiritual guide. Sidonius Apollinaris, a man of birth, wealth, and culture, was an excellent bishop of Clermont in Auvergne: but his qualities were eminently those of a layman. When the Barbarians appeared before the cities of Gaul, it was the bishop who negotiated with them, like Saint Lupus at Troyes, or even organized the inhabitants for defence, like Saint Aignan at Orleans.

---

[1] At the end of the fourth century.

§ 5. The Church and the Barbarians.

As a rule, the example of Lupus was followed rather than that of Aignan. The Church had no prejudice against the Barbarians as such: they were men with souls to save. Orosius, although still a Roman at heart, attempted to minimize, and almost to condone, the ravages committed by Alaric, who, after all, was a fellow Christian (*c.* 414). A generation later, Salvianus, himself a Catholic, frankly preferred the heretical Goths to the corrupt Pagans. This willingness to accept the new rule looks at first sight almost like a betrayal of civilization; it leads us to consider more closely a question alluded to in the preceding chapter: the responsibility of the Church for the downfall of the Roman world.

For the first two centuries of our era the Christians had been denounced as enemies of society. Their refusal to conform to the ritual which was deemed an essential duty of citizenship; their outspoken indifference to the kingdoms of this world; their apocalyptic prophecies of universal conflagration and ruin; the very secrecy of their meetings, which had been forced upon them by repressive measures: all had served as a justification for that prejudice. Could the State expect any great love from men whom it had subjected to repeated and harrowing persecutions? It is true that with growing numbers and increasing influence the Church developed a sense of civic responsibility; that even under persecution she showed at least passive loyalty to the State; that, at the first opportunity, she was ready to meet the Empire half-way; and that much of the ancient reverence for the greatness of Rome has passed into Catholicism. Yet patriotism could no longer be the first religion of the individual; the breach in the tradition could not be completely healed; too much that the Pagan world had adored was now condemned root and branch. The disasters which befell the Eternal City seemed in Christian eyes a punishment for her corruption and her crimes. Let us translate these facts into modern terms: let us imagine a sect inimical to the religious foundations and cultural traditions of the existing order; such a sect would find scant favour in the eyes of many an honest conservative. No wonder that Rutilius Namatianus should express, almost in the same breath, his ardent admiration and gratitude for the civilizing mission of Rome, and his hatred and contempt for the monks who, deserting their civic responsibilities, had fled into a life of prayer. Indifference to the common weal, neutrality and even friendliness towards the enemies of the Roman world, such were the two charges brought against the Church. Her triumph was quickly followed by that of the Barbarians: a mere coincidence, perhaps, but so striking that Saint Augustine and Orosius found it necessary to refute the obvious accusation it called forth. Their defence seems to us fanciful and unconvincing. But the Church could at least answer with a Tu Quoque. The Pagans were in these respects no better than the Christians. The Pagan aristocracy also had lost every sense of public duty; it had grown rich through exaction; it still attempted to elude, by all means legal or illegal, the payment of taxes and military service. The Pagan emperors themselves had opened wide the gates of the Roman world to the Barbarians, as colonists, as auxiliary soldiers, even as legionaries and commanders. Both of the last feeble attempts at Pagan reaction relied on the support of Barbarians: Arbogast the Frank was the mainstay of Eugenius and Flavianus; Alaric was the ally of Attalus. When Honorius passed a law to check the spread of German fashions in the dress of the Romans, there is no sign that the Christians were worse offenders than the Pagans. The Roman Empire was not based upon the idea of race. All men were welcome to the benefits of its culture. The Church did nothing but follow the same policy. Of deliberate complicity in the ruin of the ancient world there is no trace.

§ 6. DID THE CHURCH SAVE ANCIENT CULTURE?

Indeed, exactly the contrary plea is often advanced: that in the cataclysm which fell upon civilization, the Church alone succeeded in saving some of the precious wreckage. She preserved a great part of ancient learning, and became the teacher of the Barbarians.

Here, again, the case is by no means clear. The Church ought to have hated and feared the old culture, which was so closely interwoven with Paganism; as a matter of fact, there have always been Christians, from Tertullian in the second century to Veuillot in the nineteenth, logical and narrow enough to declare war on all Pagan literature. Many works of art and many books must have perished in the destruction of the temples by the followers of such energetic apostles as Saint Martin. But, with fortunate inconsistency, the Church did not repudiate the heritage of ancient culture. Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine, loved it dearly. They used it for orthodox purposes, and called the process "spoiling the Egyptians." Sidonius Apollinaris, the future bishop, was as blind a worshipper of the classics as Symmachus the Pagan.

The tradition to be transmitted was a magnificent one; the Barbarians which the Church undertook to educate—especially the Goths—were apt and willing pupils; in the light of these two facts, the results seem meagre. A few texts were transmitted; but the spirit of learning was lost; philosophy and science disappeared altogether. It is true that, before Christianity had become an important factor, Greco-Latin culture was already on the wane. Too effete to renew itself, how could it inspire Barbarians? Yet it does not seem that the Pagan schools, if they had survived to attempt the task, could have performed it more indifferently than did the Church; and we know that the Arabs, in a similar undertaking, were much more successful. The Christian West was submitted to the humiliation of receiving back a notable part of its own cultural traditions at the hands of the Infidels. Whilst recognizing to the full the services rendered by the Church in this field, it may be asserted that she did not prove equal to her opportunity.

§ 7. The Arians in Gaul.

Alliance of the Church with the Franks.

The Visigoths, who founded a kingdom in South-Western Gaul and in Spain, the Burgundians, who extended their sway over the valleys of the Rhône and of the Saône, had been converted to Arianism. They showed a creditable degree of tolerance towards their Catholic subjects. The great Ostrogothic king, Theodoric of Ravenna, is reported to have said: "We cannot impose a religion by force, since no one can be compelled to believe against his will." Alaric II of Toulouse, Gundebad of Burgundy, acted upon the same principle. Yet it would be a delusion to see in Gothic Arianism a national and liberal church. The heresiarch himself, Arius, was not more "advanced" than his opponents, but less consistent. In his system the Son was divine, although not co-eternal and co-equal with the Father. The quarrel narrowed down to the question whether Father and Son were "of the same" or "of like" essence. The far-reaching implications of such a controversy were in all probability lost upon the Barbarians: their conversion to Arianism had been a matter of chance rather than choice. Neither were the Gallo-Romans better able to follow the theological subtleties of the Greeks. But a difference is most irremediable when it is least understood. The invaders were heretics, the natives were Catholics, and this fact was sufficient to prevent a reconciliation of the two elements.

It was for that reason that the Catholic bishops struck an alliance with Clovis, King of the heathen Franks. He at least was neutral in the quarrel, and could be won over to the orthodox side. He married the only Catholic princess in Gaul (493). Thenceforward miracles helped his career of conquest. The God of Clotilda gave him victory over the Alamans, and thereupon he received baptism at the hands of Saint Remi. A mysterious light shone on the cathedral of Poitiers to guide his army; a white doe revealed to him a ford of the river Vienne. Burgundy and Toulouse were honeycombed with Catholic disloyalty. And these two great kingdoms, populous and comparatively civilized, were, the one held in check, the other subjugated, by a chieftain who, at the outset, had led a band of only six thousand warriors. "He fought: the bishops conquered."

§ 8. Corruption of the Frankish Church.

This alliance between the Church and the monarchy achieved its immediate purpose: Catholicism and the Franks were supreme in Gaul. It has remained one of the most permanent factors in French history: after thirteen hundred years, it still plays a part in the crises of our times. From the spiritual point of view, the gain was slight. The story of the Catholic Merovingians, as we shall see, is a sickening record of cruelty and corruption. But the Church was committed; and good Gregory of Tours wrote with unconscious blasphemy: "Thus, day by day, God brought low his enemies before him (Clovis), so that they submitted to him, and increased his kingdom, because he walked before Him with an upright heart, and did that which was pleasing in His sight."

The very favour of the Frankish kings was soon to prove dangerous to the Church: the wealth and power enjoyed by the bishops were tempting prizes, which the Sovereign bestowed upon his barbaric companions. Among the successors of the cultured Gallo-Roman bishops such as Sidonius Apollinaris, Saint Remi, and even Saint Gregory of Tours, we find coarse warriors who could hunt, fight, and get drunk, but who could not read. The corruption of the Merovingian clergy is almost unbelievable. Yet never were there so many "saints" as in those stormy days. Rome was not consulted, and a halo seemed the birthright of every prominent bishop, even though he were embroiled in dark intrigues like Saint Prætextatus, or in constant civil war like Saint Leger.

Conditions were somewhat better under the Carolingians. Charles Martel rewarded with Church benefices the men who had helped him save Christendom from the Saracens: but the title to the land remained with the Church—a form of divided property in which one of the origins of feudalism can be traced. In the ecclesiastical as well as in other domains the vigorous hand of Charlemagne restored some degree of discipline and order. Priests were unfrocked for keeping several concubines, getting publicly drunk, or trafficking in the sacramental oils. Abbots were prohibited to punish their monks by putting their eyes out or cutting off their limbs. Such reforms shed a curious light on the Frankish Church. The Church is an integral part of society: it could not but be barbaric in a barbaric world.

§ 9. MONASTICISM.

Frankish corruption after Roman corruption: no wonder that thousands of single-hearted Christians fled the City of Destruction. Nor could their flight be fairly described as desertion of duty, and "selfish holiness": these men believed in the efficacy of prayer and of vicarious sacrifice; they formed an army of spiritual defence.

In the East, where it originated, Christian asceticism assumed at times fantastic and even repulsive forms; some of the saints are little better than Hindu yoghis or fakirs; and the monkish mob of Nitria in Egypt has left an evil name in Church history. But even there, under the guidance of Saint Anthony and Saint Pachomius, there had been admirable examples of true saintliness. The apostle of Gaul, Saint Martin, founded, near Poitiers and Tours, monasteries of the Oriental type. This lead was followed by Cassian at Marseilles and Honoratus in the Isle of Lerins. And there were also a number of isolated holy men, ascetes and mendicants: Saint Gregory tells us of hermits, especially in Auvergne, whose unnatural austerities rivalled those of the Syrian monks. It was not until the seventh century that the Irish rule of Saint Columbanus and that of Saint Benedict secured a foothold in Gaul. For a time the three types of monachism—Gallic, Irish, and Benedictine—existed side by side. But the Benedictine, the sanest and most virile, conquered such undisputed sway that Charlemagne did not know there existed any other.

The Benedictines.

Benedictine monasticism owes its origin to Saint Benedict of Nursia, who founded a monastery at Monte Cassino about 520. The dominant features of his rule were the adoption of a hard, but healthy and well-regulated life, and the prominence given to manual labour as well as to reading. This reading was exclusively in the Bible and the Fathers: the transmission of ancient culture was not within the scope of early monasticism. The chief duty of the monks was to praise God in psalms. In the words of Dom E. C. Butler,[1] " all the services of Benedictines to civilization and education and letters have been but by-products." By-products indeed, but magnificent ones. The curse of servilism had degraded manual labour in the eyes of the ancient world. Christianity, worshipping the Son of the carpenter, did much to combat that prejudice. Saint Augustine reminded the monks of his day that " Saint Paul earned his living by means of a legitimate and honourable trade, similar to those of the smiths, the masons, the shoemakers, the ploughmen, and other working people." True to this spirit, the Benedictines carried in their belt a sickle, as a reminder that it was their duty to cultivate the earth. They chose the wildest places, cleared, drained, and tilled them, and turned them into well-ordered estates, a model for their Gallo-Roman or Teutonic neighbours. Unfortunately, this rehabilitation of humble and useful toil was doomed to comparative failure. The monks themselves became slothful. They parcelled out their estates to tenants or serfs; they left the hardest work to lay brethren held in a position of inferiority. The laity did not take to heart the lesson that Christianity attempted to teach. The feudal aristocrat—and his Catholic descendant to-day—entertained the same prejudices as the Roman patrician. The old stigma remained attached to manual labour.

§ 10. CONCLUSION: THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

We have attempted to convey to the reader some impression of the confusion and contradictions which enveloped the introduction of Christianity into Gaul. Christianity is, by common assent, the most momentous of all spiritual revolutions. Yet it brought no perceptible alleviation to the evils of the ancient world. The vast processes of dissolution and rebirth went on their slow inexorable way. Christianity did not cause the decay of Rome: but it failed to check it. It did not corrupt the Barbarians: but neither did it make them appreciably less cruel, nor purer in their morals. We are not certain that woman in the Middle Ages held a safer or more honoured position than in primitive Germany or in Republican Rome. The exaltation of chastity, the greatest single contribution of Christianity to ethical progress, often had, among the monks, a tinge of abnormality; the preaching of purity failed to cleanse even the clergy, who succumbed too frequently to the temptations of carnal lust: Christian reformers had for ever to wage the same battle over again. Slavery was not challenged in its principle; its hardships were mitigated; yet many a Christian lord treated his serfs with less humanity than a Roman stoic would have shown. The dignity of labour was taught, but it was taught in vain. The cruel gladiatorial games disappeared: but the horrors of private war, persecutions, and judicial torture are lamentable evidence of the persistent tigerishness in man. There was a decided increase in credulity, and no immediate decline in materialistic superstition. Bad as were the centuries of Pagan decadence, the Christian Dark Ages are worse.

---

[1] Abbot of Downside Abbey—*Cambridge Mediæval History*, 1–389.

One lesson, at any rate, should be clear in our minds. Although it may be difficult to conceive of a religion without a theology, and of a theology without a church, yet the three are never identical. Religion is refracted into theologies through the imperfect crystal of the human intellect; and the divinely appointed Church, dealing with the powers of this world, is bound to become to a great extent a thing of this world, a temporal administration officered by frail and sinful men. The triumph of Christianity is a distant consummation devoutly to be prayed for; the triumph of the Catholic Church is an historical fact to be appraised with the same fearlessness as any other fact. This triumph was followed by centuries of darkness. To make the Church responsible for this relapse would be absurd; but to ignore or deny the darkness itself would be dishonest.

Human progress is due to a myriad of interacting causes. The Church is the spiritual sovereign of the people: like the civil sovereign, it mirrors the faults and the virtues of the people. At times it helps and guides, at other times it hampers and blocks their advance. A natural tendency is to take the form for the cause, and to make an institution, church, or monarchy responsible for all the good or all the evil in history. In Anglo-Saxon countries, there is still a strong bias in favour of the Christian Church. In France the opposite prejudice, the Voltairian or anticlerical tradition, is powerful and respectable.[1] The only safe conclusion is that the light dawns but slowly in the hearts of men, and that the most consecrated instruments, being human, must all too often hinder the cause they want to serve.

---

[1] Cf., all in recent years: S. Reinach, *Orpheus*; A. France, *L'Ile des Pingouins*; E. Champion, *Vue Générale de l'Histoire de France.*

CHAPTER VI

THE FRANKS

§ 1. The Great Invasions

The Great Invasions, properly so-called, were due to the migration of the Huns. They may be said to begin about 376, when the Visigoths were driven to seek the protection of the Eastern Empire. They reached Gaul in 406, when bands of Vandals, Sueves, and Alans crossed the Rhine; and their end was marked by the check which Attila suffered on the Catalaunian Fields (or Mauriac Plain) in 451. At the dawn of the fifth century the Western Empire was still standing: Rome had seen such evil days before, and emerged triumphant. Long before that century closed, the substance and even the insignia of power had passed to Barbarian kings, and a new period opened in history.

But the invasions were not a sudden, isolated cataclysm; they were the climax in a process which had been under way for half a millennium, and which was not to end for another five hundred years. The migrations of the Gauls (fourth and third centuries B.C.); the devastating flood of Cimbric and Teutonic hordes (113-101 B.C.); the constant watch of the Romans on the Rhine, from the day when Cæsar defeated Ariovistus; the incursions of the Franks and Alamans, culminating in the terrible forays of A.D. 257 and 275; their renewal in the fourth century, when they were repelled by Julian; the depredations of the Saxon pirates on the northern and western shores: all these were episodes in the same drama. Long before the fifth century Barbarians had settled in Gaul; and, in her repeated fits of marvellous recovery, Rome had captured such multitudes of them as to glut the slave market; German auxiliary troops, or Læti, were quartered in every province; whole tribes, defeated in battle, or won over by diplomacy, were admitted as confederates, and loyally defended the border against the following wave of invaders. Nor were these conditions suddenly altered in 406. The Franks valiantly fought Rome's battles against the Vandals, the Sueves, and the Alans; they, the Burgundians and especially the Visigoths, rallied to Aetius to repel Attila. We have to deal, therefore, not with a united onslaught of the Germanic against the Roman world, but with a long and confused series of wars, truces, alliances, compromises, accompanied all the while by infiltration and assimilation. So long as Rome was strong she could at will check or adopt her enemies; her inner decay, rather than their efforts, made her ruin irremediable.

Even after the Barbarians had thrown off every semblance of allegiance to Rome, the invasions went on as before; and as before the men in possession turned fiercely against the newcomers, even though they were of the same race. Clovis was not, like his father Childeric, an ally of the Romans: but he repelled the Alamans on his own account. From that time on the Franks became the champions of Roman Christianity against the other Germans: the greatest of the Frankish rulers, Charlemagne, spent most of his life fighting Teutonic Barbarians. His dynasty came to an end in France because it had failed to cope with the Norman invasions. The Norse pirates were the last people to settle in France as a body, with a formal grant of land (911). But the Hungarians hovered on the north-eastern boundary until the end of the tenth century. It was not until then, therefore, that the era of folk-wandering in Western Europe can be said to have closed, or that the ethnic formation of France can be considered complete. Afterwards there have been invasions, but always of a purely military and temporary nature; there has been infiltration, but so gradual as not to affect the character of the nation.[1]

---

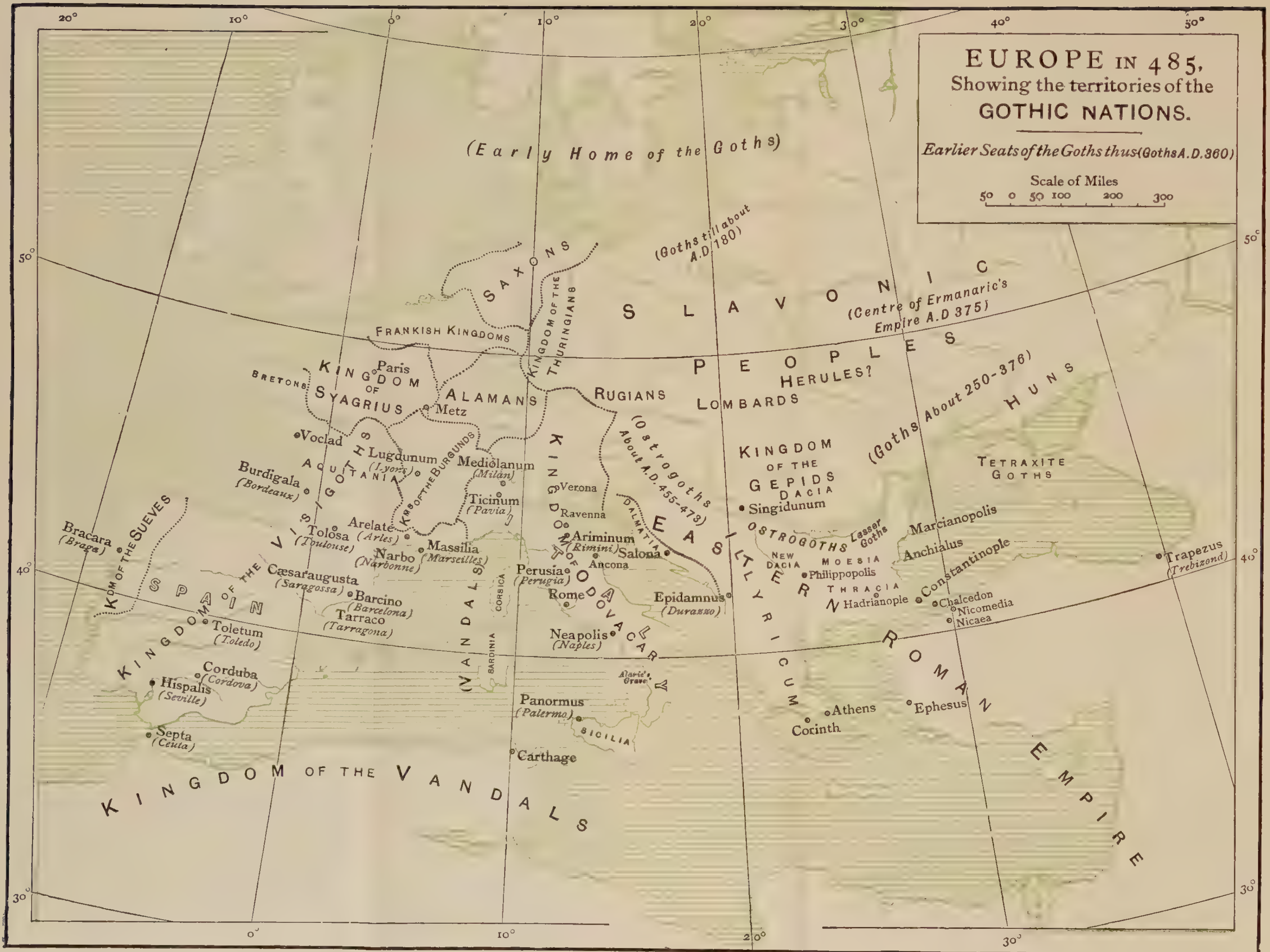
[1] Let us note two eddies in the stream of invasion: about 450 the Britons, attacked by the Picts and Scots, and also by the Anglo-Saxons—whom they had perhaps called in themselves—passed in large numbers over to Armorica, which thus became Celtic again, and was henceforth known as Brittany. The Basques, who had maintained themselves independent on the *Spanish* side of the Pyrenees, were defeated by the Visigoths, crossed over the mountains, and gave their name, Gascony, to a part of Aquitania (578–587); but this movement is not established without a doubt. The Saracenic invasion in the eighth century belongs, of course, to a totally different set of events.

§ 2. BURGUNDIANS, VISIGOTHS, AND FRANKS IN GAUL.

The main body of the Alans, Vandals, and Sueves passed into Spain, leaving behind unimportant detachments which soon lost their identity. The Burgundians, after long wanderings, had established a kingdom on the Middle Rhine, with Worms as its capital. This kingdom was destroyed by the Huns: the tradition of this catastrophe is preserved in the Niebelungen Lied. The Romans assigned to the shattered fragments of the Burgundian nation a territory on the banks of Lake Leman. They soon extended their sway over the whole valley of the Rhône and Saône, but still under the nominal suzerainty of Rome. Gigantic and uncouth, the Burgundians were typical Barbarians; but, even before they had crossed the Rhine, they had intermarried with Roman settlers, and acquired a taste for civilization. The law of their king Gundebad shows a desire to establish perfect equality between the native population and the newcomers.

The Visigoths settled in Southern Gaul under Ataulf and Wallia, the successors of Alaric, and founded there the kingdom of Toulouse. They, too, acknowledged the supremacy of Rome, and were willing to accept its culture. The migration of a barbaric nation in arms could not fail to be attended with devastation and spoliation. But soon some rough order was evolved, and, especially under Euric, the court of Toulouse, with a number of Roman officials, did not lack brilliancy. For the use of his Gallo-Roman subjects, Alaric II ordered a compendium of Roman law to be made, which is known as the Breviarium Alarici. The one obstacle to the fusion between the old and the new elements of the population was that Burgundians and Visigoths professed Arianism instead of Catholic Christianity.

The Franks formed neither a single nation nor even a confederacy, but a vaguely defined group of tribes. It has even been maintained that they presented no ethnic unity, and were merely aggregations of warriors for purposes of conquest and plunder. Such may have been their origin, but by the time they played an important part in history the Franks had become definitely constituted peoples, with their dynasties, their traditions, and their laws. The Ripuarian Franks remained on the banks of the Lower Rhine,



EUROPE IN 485,
Showing the territories of the
GOTHIC NATIONS.

Earlier Seats of the Goths thus (Goths A.D. 360)

Scale of Miles

The Salian[1] Franks advanced into the region of the Lower Meuse (Toxandria); defeated by Julian, they were confirmed by him in the possession of the land, as the allies of Rome. They were loyal to the Empire as long as there was an Empire to defend. Their semi-fabulous king Merovech (Meroveus), son of a sea-monster, fought Attila under Aetius; his son, Childeric, helped Ægidius against the Visigoths.

The last Western Emperor was deposed in 476. In 481 Clovis succeeded Childeric as one of the kings of the Salian Franks. He had barely six thousand warriors under his command, and his dominion did not extend further south than the Somme. The Ripuarians, the Alamans, and a small body of Thuringians occupied the left bank of the Rhine. A Roman general, Syagrius, son of Ægidius, governed the country from the Somme to the Loire, and was known to the Barbarians as "King of the Romans"; Armorica, recently conquered by the Britons, was independent; the Visigoths ruled from the Loire to the Straits of Gibraltar, and also over Provence. The Burgundians held the Saône and Rhône basin as far south as the Durance.

§ 3. CONQUEST OF GAUL BY THE MEROVINGIANS.

Clovis.

In 486 the young chieftain—he was then twenty years old—defeated Syagrius near the latter's capital, Soissons. The bishop of the city asked for the return of a sacred vase which was part of the booty; and Clovis would have complied with his request had not an unruly warrior smashed the vessel with his battle-axe. This deference to the wishes of a priest is the first indication of what was to become a settled and fruitful policy: the alliance of the Frankish monarchs with the Catholic Church. In 493 Clovis married a Catholic princess, Clotilda; and his children were baptized into their mother's faith. In 496, after a bitterly fought but indecisive victory over the Alamans near Strasbourg,[2] he was officially converted to Catholic Christianity. He was unable, however, to subdue the heretical Burgundians (500). In 505–7 he waged against the Alamans of Alsace a war of extermination which compelled them to seek refuge under

[1] From sal, the salt sea.

[2] Often referred to as Tolbiacum.

the protection of Theodoric. Then he turned to the Visigoths, inflicted upon them a crushing defeat at Vouillé near Poitiers (507), and drove them from Aquitania. The intervention of Theodoric saved Septimania or Lower Languedoc for the Visigoths, whilst the Ostrogoths kept Provence as the price of their services. On his way back from this war Clovis received at Tours the insignia of consular rank from the Emperor of the East, Anastasius. He established the seat of his government at Paris. He presided over a council of the Church at Orleans; he ordered the law of the Salian Franks to be written down. Thus had the obscure kinglet of a Teutonic tribe, through cruelty and craft, through luck and wisdom, grown to be a conqueror and a legislator, the heir of Rome and the friend of the Church. Clovis deserves to rank among those few commanding personalities—Cæsar, Charlemagne, Louis XIV, Napoleon—in whom a whole period, a whole revolution, are symbolized.

The conquest of Gaul was all but completed by his sons, who added to their domains Burgundy and Provence. Only Septimania remained in the hands of the Visigoths, and later of the Arabs, until the reign of Pepin. In the East the Frankish dominions extended far into Germany, over the whole valley of the Rhine, including that of its great tributary, the Main. This immense empire retained its unity in theory. In practice it was parcelled out, without any respect for physical geography or racial affinities, among the four sons of Clovis (511), and again among the four sons of Chloter I (561). Gradually more natural and more permanent divisions began to appear: the Eastern Frankish Kingdom, or Austrasia, in the valleys of the Rhine and the Meuse; the "Newest" Frankish Kingdom, or Neustria, in the north-west; Burgundy, in shifting alliance with one or the other of these constant rivals; and, under the joint overlordship of the three, the semi-independent duchy of Aquitania.

Brunehaut.

We need not dwell upon the dull tales of atrocities recorded by the Merovingian chroniclers, Gregory of Tours and Pseudo-Fredegar. Out of this bloody chaos there stands out one commanding figure, that of Brunhild or Brunehaut. This Visigothic princess, of great beauty and learning, married Sigebert, King of Metz (Austrasia). Her sister and her husband were both murdered by command of Fredegund, the slave-born concubine of Chilperic, King of Soissons; and the war between the two families assumed a character of ferocity unexampled even in that dark period. Under the name of her son and of her grandson, Brunhild ruled Austrasia and even Burgundy. She attempted to curb the lawless aristocracy, and to restore the power and splendour of the kingly office. She was friendly to the Church without subserviency; she corresponded with Gregory the Great, but she banished the monk Columbanus. Such was the impression that she made upon the popular imagination that the works of Rome came to be ascribed to her, and that the ancient roads are still known in certain places as "Brunhild's Causeway." After the most romantic adventures, the aged and indomitable queen fell into the hands of her foes. She was tortured for three days, and attached naked to the tail of a wild horse.

§ 4. DECADENCE OF THE MEROVINGIANS; RISE OF THE PEPINS.

After Dagobert (639), the Merovingian Solomon, whose glory still lives, quaintly distorted, in a French nursery rhyme, the decadence of the reigning family became irremediable. The kings gave themselves up to gluttony and debauchery in earliest youth: at twenty they were senile ghosts, preserving no attribute of kingship except their unshorn locks. Under these "Fainéant" or do-nothing kings there rose to power a new official, the Mayor of the Palace, or Manager of the Royal Estates. In Neustria a great mayor, Ebroin, attempted to strengthen the monarchy against the aristocracy; but he was murdered in 681; and his successor, Berthar, was defeated by the Austrasians at Tertry (687).[1] This battle of Tertry has sometimes been interpreted as the victory of the Teutonic over the Romanized element among the Franks. This is an exaggeration: for there were many Teutons among the Neustrian warriors, and Metz, the Austrasian capital, was in Romance-speaking territory. It seems, however, that the family which had assumed control in Austrasia represented, more clearly than the Merovingians or than the Neustrian mayors, the purely Germanic tradition.[2]

---

[1] Or Testry.

[2] Charles Martel's nickname, the Hammer, may be a trace of Thor-worship.

This family had come into prominence with Arnulf and Pepin of Landen. A premature attempt to seize the crown was made by Grimoald, and punished by death. Pepin of Heristal, the victor of Tertry, established at a single stroke the supremacy of Austrasia and that of his own house. After a short period of anarchy, his illegitimate son, Charles Martel, crushed all opposition in Neustria, Burgundy, and Aquitania as well as in Austrasia, defeated the Arabs between Tours and Poitiers (732), led expeditions into Saxony, and was in all but in name the sole king of the Franks. It was reserved for his son, Pepin the Short, to discard the fiction of Merovingian rule. With the assent of the Pope he deposed King Childeric, had himself elected in his place by the lords, and, to make doubly sure, was also consecrated by the bishops.

It is one of history's little ironies that Charles Martel, champion of the cross against the crescent, without whose victory "Oxford might be teaching Islamism to-day," should have been consigned by the priests to hell fire: he rewarded too liberally his lieutenants with ecclesiastical benefices. His son, on the contrary, renewed and strengthened the pact of Clovis: the second race was, as emphatically as the first, the ally of Catholicism. Pepin the Short protected the Pope against Byzantines and Lombards, and began a much-needed reform in the Frankish Church. In this, in his subjugation of the Aquitanians, in his Lombard and Saxon wars, in his legislation, in his efforts to foster what feeble culture still lingered in Gaul, this truly great king paved the way for his still greater successor. Perhaps the fame of Charlemagne has unduly eclipsed that of Pepin the Short.[1]

§ 5. Charlemagne: his Reign and Legend.

In 768 Pepin died. According to the bad old Frankish custom, his domains were divided between his two sons, Charles and Carloman. The latter, however, survived his father by three years only; and Charles, brushing aside the claims of his nephews, became sole ruler. He completed and extended, magnificently, the work of his two predecessors. He had to subdue Aquitania again; but, by respecting its traditions, he secured at last its loyalty. He reduced

---

[1] Even this nickname may do him an injustice: it rests on no serious evidence.

Bavaria to stricter vassalage. He finally destroyed the power of the Lombards. Redeeming the pledge of his father, Pepin, he gave the Pope the Exarchate of Ravenna, which belonged to the Eastern Empire. He made repeated but rather ineffectual incursions into Northern Spain, and established a new March or frontier province beyond the Pyrenees.[1] For thirty-two years, moved by religious as well as by political motives, he waged war against the heathen Saxons. Their idol Irminsul was destroyed; 4,500 men were beheaded in a single day at Verden; their national hero Vitikind had to accept Christianity and the rule of Charles; one-third of the population was dragged away and settled in Franconia and Alemannia. Bishops were sent to organize the Church in Saxon land. It remains doubtful whether a people converted by the grace of the sword could ever fully grasp the message of the Prince of Peace. Beyond the limits of the German world Charles defeated the Avars, and held in check the Slavs and the Danes. In the Christian West, the kingdom of Asturias and those of the British Isles, although unconquered, acknowledged his leadership; the Eastern Empire finally recognized him; and friendly embassies proved that his fame had reached the Caliph of Bagdad.

On Christmas Day 800, Pope Leo III set the imperial crown upon the head of Charles, whilst the assembled Romans and Franks burst into the cry: "Long life and victory to Charles, most pious, Augustus, crowned of God, great and pacific Emperor of the Romans!" The details and the full meaning of this transaction are not perfectly clear. It seems that Charles was taken by surprise, and felt annoyance rather than elation at the Pope's initiative. His reluctance, if we accept it as proven and as sincere, was not due to any Germanic contempt for a Roman title; still less to any superstitious respect for the theoretical claims of the Greek Empire. Charles, as Patricius and Protector of the Roman Republic, considered himself as the temporal head of the Christian state and the overlord of the Pope. This overlordship he had but recently exercised to the full: to his protection alone did Leo III owe his restoration to the papal throne; and only two days before, the Holy Father, accused of adultery and perjury, had cleared himself by an oath, in the presence of the Frankish King acting as a judge. Charles may have resented the act of Leo as a piece of impertinence. But the title expressed most fittingly the two principal characteristics of Charles's rule: the hegemony of the Franks in the West and the theocratic ideal.

---

[1] In 778, as his army was returning from one of these expeditions, the rear-guard was cut to pieces by the Christian Basques, and among the unavenged slain lay Roland, prefect of the Breton March.

The new title, which Charles seems for a while to have ignored, brought no change in his government. The years of conquest were over, and the Emperor enjoyed in peace the respect of the whole Christian world. The majesty of his old age was somewhat sullied by the persistency of licentiousness at his own court and in his own life; and a telling anecdote represents the aged monarch assailed with forebodings at the news of Norman raids. He passed away at Aix-la-Chapelle, long his favourite residence, in 814. There is hardly any more impressive personality in history than that of Charlemagne. When we think of Merovingian barbarism and chaos, of the ruined condition of the roads in Gaul, of their total absence in Saxony, then his victories, his administration, and even the flickering renaissance of learning which he encouraged, assume an almost fabulous grandeur. As a hero of legend he is unsurpassed except by Alexander. He was soon the centre of an epic cycle—rather, it must be noted, among the French than among the Germans; he was "the Emperor with the Flowery Beard": 200 years old, whose power kept the East as well as the West in awe. In 1165, by an even bolder transformation, the energetic but dissolute warrior received the halo of a saint; and the day of Saint Charlemagne was until recently a holiday for French schoolboys, for another legend made him the founder of modern education. His example was constantly before the eyes of Napoleon, whose empire was almost co-extensive with the Carolingian dominions; and who once threatened the Pope "to cancel the donation of *my predecessor*, Charlemagne." His name, rivalling Cæsar's, is synonymous with "ruler" in Slavic languages. He dominates the whole history of Germany, and his shade has flitted through the morbidly gigantic dreams of modern rulers. Well may we be tempted to say with Viscount Bryce: "From this moment (Christmas 800) modern history begins."

So far as France is concerned, however, this would be a wild exaggeration. The greatness of Charles lies in his personality, which is the surest foundation for his legend. But that personality was not transmitted with his blood, and his work perished with him. He had attempted to weld the Christian West into a single whole: thirty years after his death, the nations separated, never to be permanently united again. His idea of empire proved a curse to Germany and to Italy—a curse from which France was fortunately exempt. He had stood for a strong central government: and disintegration proceeded so fast under the kings of his line that, in the tenth century, there were thousands of independent principalities in his former domains. The Carolingian Renaissance, creditable though it be, was but a false dawn: there were still two hundred years of darkness to go through. His reform of the Church had to be done over again. His capital remained a minor city.

§ 6. Decadence of the Carolingians.

His successor, whom contemporaries called Louis the Pious, and history Louis the Weak, had to face the repeated rebellions of his sons, who once captured and deposed him (833-4). At his death in 840, Lothair, the eldest, became Emperor. But his younger brothers, Louis and Charles, defeated him, bound themselves together against him by the bilingual oath of Strasbourg (842), and imposed upon him the Treaty of Verdun (843). This treaty was but a family compact for the division of the Frankish domains; it was made without any regard for linguistic differences or natural boundaries. Yet it may be said to mark the faint beginning of modern nationalities. For to the share of Louis fell Francia Orientalis, where the Teutonic element prevailed; Charles the Bald received Francia Occidentalis, almost completely romanized. Between the two was carved for Lothair a long and loose strip of territory, in the valleys of the Meuse, the Rhine, the Saône and the Rhône, with the parts of Italy then under Frankish influence. A variable and ever-dwindling part of this preposterous Empire came to be known as Lotharingia, Lothringen, Lorraine; and for over a thousand years France and Germany have been fighting for the heritage of Lothair.

Throughout the ninth century the incursions of the Northmen were increasing in fierceness and frequency. Their "dragon boats" boldly ascended the Seine and the

Loire, spreading terror. In the hope of securing a strong leader, the lords of West Francia elected to the throne Charles the Fat of Germany, under whom the whole Empire was united for the last time. Paris was valiantly defended by Count Eudes (Odo), the son of another vigorous fighter, Robert the Strong. When Charles the Fat appeared with an "immense" army, he simply bribed the invaders off with treasures and the spoils of Burgundy. Indignant at his cowardice, the French deposed him in 887, and elected in his stead the hero of Paris, Eudes. For a whole century the last Carolingians and the kings of the new race occupied the throne, either alternately or in armed rivalry. The lowest depths of humiliation were reached by the Carolingian Charles the Simple, by whom Rollo, the Norse pirate, was granted the fair duchy of Normandy (911). This pitiful kinglet lost his last strongholds to rebellious nobles, and died a prisoner at Péronne. Finally, in 987, the direct line of Charles the Great came to an end with Louis V "Do-Nothing," and Hugh Capet, a descendant of Robert the Strong and of Eudes, was chosen king. No one was conscious of any great revolution. The new race was not appreciably more French or less Frankish than the old. The Germans had lent their support at times to the Carolingian claimants, at times to the rising dynasty of France. A very humble sovereign indeed was this Hugh Capet: in theory "first among his peers," overshadowed in reality by many of his vassals. Yet for eight hundred years his family was to rule France, through days of splendour and days of distress, and his direct heirs have followers to-day. With the accession of this national line the history of France, properly so-called, may be said to have begun.

§ 7. The Teutonic Invasions and the Feudal Aristocracy.

The substitution of Frankish for Roman rule was, no doubt, a momentous revolution; but its significance has been obscured by theories and prejudices. Early in the eighteenth century, Boulainvilliers, a thorough believer in aristocratic government, maintained that the "feudal" privileges of the French nobility were based on descent from the Frankish conquerors; and Sieyès, at the beginning of the French revolution, endorsed the same opinion when he said: "Let them (the nobles) return to the marshes of Germany, whence they came." Balzac shows us an old aristocrat who, at the news of the Revolution of 1830, cries out: "The Gauls are victorious!" In this crude form the theory is palpably false. The class system in France never rested on race distinction. We have seen that the Burgundians were few, and soon assimilated. After driving the Goths beyond the Pyrenees, the Franks did not fill their places, so that Aquitania remained very different from Austrasia and Neustria. But even north of the Loire we do not find the Frankish warriors, who were a mere handful, suddenly established as the sole aristocracy. The policy of Clovis, on the contrary, was to respect the rights and property of the Gallo-Romans, and the new landowners simply joined the ranks of the senatorial gentry.[1] Military service was the great avenue to wealth and distinction; but there were Roman troops under the command of Clovis, and the army was open to all free men. Among the counts appointed by the Merovingians there were at first more Gallo-Romans than Franks. After a while it became impossible to distinguish between the two elements, as many Gallo-Romans had adopted Frankish names. There was a recrudescence of Teutonic influences under the Austrasian Mayors of the Palace and under the Carolingian kings; but even then it seems safe to say that in Neustria, Burgundy, Aquitania—more than three-fourths of present-day France—the Franks formed only a minority of the aristocracy. This aristocracy was renewed several times over in the course of centuries. Soldiers of fortune, servants of the king, even merchants, were given titles; "mesalliances," although frowned upon, have never ceased to take place between nobility and commoners. By the time of Boulainvilliers, at any rate, there was no trace of any racial difference between the lords and the bourgeois. The portraits of the aristocracy, from the earliest time when they offer a sufficient character of authenticity, fail to reveal any distinctive Teutonic feature which is not common among the rest of the people.

---

[1] It is true that, according to Salic law, the wergeld or compensation for murder is 200 solidi if the victim be a Frank, 100 only if he be a Roman. But this law was applied only when the murderer himself was a Frank. If the slayer of a Frank were a Gallo-Roman, he would be judged according to Roman law. Naturally it was a more heinous crime for a Frank to kill one of his own race than to kill a stranger.

§ 8. The Teutonic Interpretation of French History.

The Frankish theory is generally stated in a more guarded form. It is not maintained that the feudal nobility had preserved the purity of their Frankish blood, but only that their privileges had their origin in the Frankish conquest. This is a moot point. Whilst one school traced every mediæval institution to German precedents, the Romanists, headed by Fustel de Coulanges, attempted to prove that feudal conditions were already arising under the Roman regime. The one outstanding fact, however, is that feudalism, properly so-called, was not fully formed until the tenth century, when Carolingian rule had broken down, and the fusion of races in France was practically complete.

This battle over dead institutions may seem of little interest except to specialists; but a regime implies a spirit, and the Frankish problem, in its most general terms, confronts us to-day. It is the counterpart of the "Latin problem," which was outlined at the close of the preceding chapter. "A certain civilization, it is said, grew in Europe, based on principles wholly different from those of Roman law. It was characterized by the predominance of the warrior class; by the idea of hereditary privileges instead of general abstract rights; by the confusion between property and authority. A rough, vigorous complex: chaotic and brutal enough, no doubt, but not without redeeming features: the value set upon individual prowess, the loyalty of man to man, devotion to the Church, a new sense of reverence for womanhood, the exaltation of purity. This civilization, once again, was not Roman: it was Christian-Teutonic, and Teutonic more than Christian."

Back of this theory we find, lurking or blatant, the conception that the Germanic races brought with them new ideals, new sources of strength, a new blood, which saved the world from corruption. In other words—why not discard sham modesty?—it means that the Teutons are God's own people, and the masters of modern culture. This Teutonism has played a great part in historical thought. In France we find the ground prepared for it by Mme. de Staël's epoch-making book *De l'Allemagne*, and by the German sympathies of the great romanticists, Quinet, Michelet, Victor Hugo. It was clearly formulated by an eccentric diplomat and amateur Orientalist, Count de Gobineau.[1] Renan toyed with it. "Anthroposociologists" of no mean repute, like Vacher de la Pouge, and, in ante bellum days, Gustave Le Bon, treated it as an axiom. Houston Stewart Chamberlain uses it as the master-key to European history; and, oddly coalescing with the philosophy of the anti-Prussian rhapsodist Nietzsche, it has hurled Germany against the world. We find it, diluted but not innocuous, in almost every historical text-book in the English language.

"This much at least cannot be controverted: that the Barbarians brought in new blood." But what is meant by this cant phrase? How can we tell the "age" of a race? If a climate is debilitating, civilization can be kept up at a high level—it might be more exact to say, at high speed—only through the infusion of "new blood" from more favoured countries. This may be true of India and Egypt. It was obviously not true of Roman Gaul, which was no less healthy than Germany. "New blood" may mean the substitution, not of young for old, but of strong for weak. We know that the Barbarians, including the ancient Gauls, were taller than the Greeks and the Romans. We have no right to say that they were of finer physique, braver, better able to bear fatigue, harder working: and these, not mere stature, are the characteristics of a noble race. Shall we say that the "new blood" introduced a simpler, healthier life? This was much needed in Rome: but Gaul was overwhelmingly rural. Were the Barbarians purer in their morals? The record of the Merovingian and Carolingian kings and of their nobles is singularly black. Were they freer in their government? Their monarchy was hereditary and absolute; election was resorted to only in rare crises, and even frequent assassination failed to temper despotism. Were they bolder in their thought? The most childish superstitions never found blinder believers.

§ 9. NET RESULT: THE DARK AGES.

Brushing aside philoteutonic prejudices, we find that the Barbaric invasions meant a relapse into barbarism—a relapse which lasted five hundred years. This fact would be perfectly plain if we were not still in the habit of bracketing together, as "Middle Ages," the ten centuries from the fall of Rome to the dawn of the Renaissance. This seems to establish some connection between the great invasions and the undeniable splendours of Gothic art. It would be less confusing to have modern history begin—very humbly—about the year 1000; from that time, progress, however slow and irregular, has been uninterrupted in the main. The half millennium that precedes is an interregnum—the Dark Ages.[1] It was an age of cruelty, ignorance, and corruption. What literature can it boast of? Under the Merovingian there is still "the Herodotus of Barbarism," a Gallo-Roman, Gregory of Tours; there are inane Latin poets, Avitus, Fortunatus. Soon we sink to the dreary level of Pseudo-Fredegar; after him, darkness absolute. Even the vaunted Carolingian renaissance is not brilliant: who claims intrinsic merit for Alcuin, Eginhard, Peter of Pisa, Teodulf, or later the Monk of St. Gall?[2] In art we have some rough jewellery: the famous throne that Saint Eligius wrought for Dagobert, the crowns of Charlemagne, and, as a fabled masterpiece, the chapel of Aix—pastiched from Saint Vital at Ravenna, adorned with materials torn from ancient buildings. So far as institutions are concerned, we find very little trace of early German liberties. If the Roman system of taxation, oppressive and unjust, had been abandoned, no other system took its place; the income from private domains, gifts (more or less voluntary) and exactions, supplied the needs of the court. Law—either Roman or Teutonic—broke into a multitude of chaotic local customs. Even the Capitularies show no grasp of principles. The Teutonic world produced one powerful personality, Charlemagne, a warrior, a born administrator, who saw to it that his estates were properly managed, kept his dukes and counts well in hand, checked them through his inspector and itinerant judges, the Missi Dominici; but soon after his death his creations fell into disuse, the officials usurped hereditary rights, and chaos once more reigned supreme.

---

[1] *Essai sur l'Inégalité des Races Humaines*, 1853–5.

---

[1] French historians are worse offenders than we are in this respect. There is no term in French exactly corresponding to our "Dark Ages." The misleading expression Haut Moyen Age is generally used. The excellent *Mediæval History* of the University of Cambridge covers the Dark Ages.

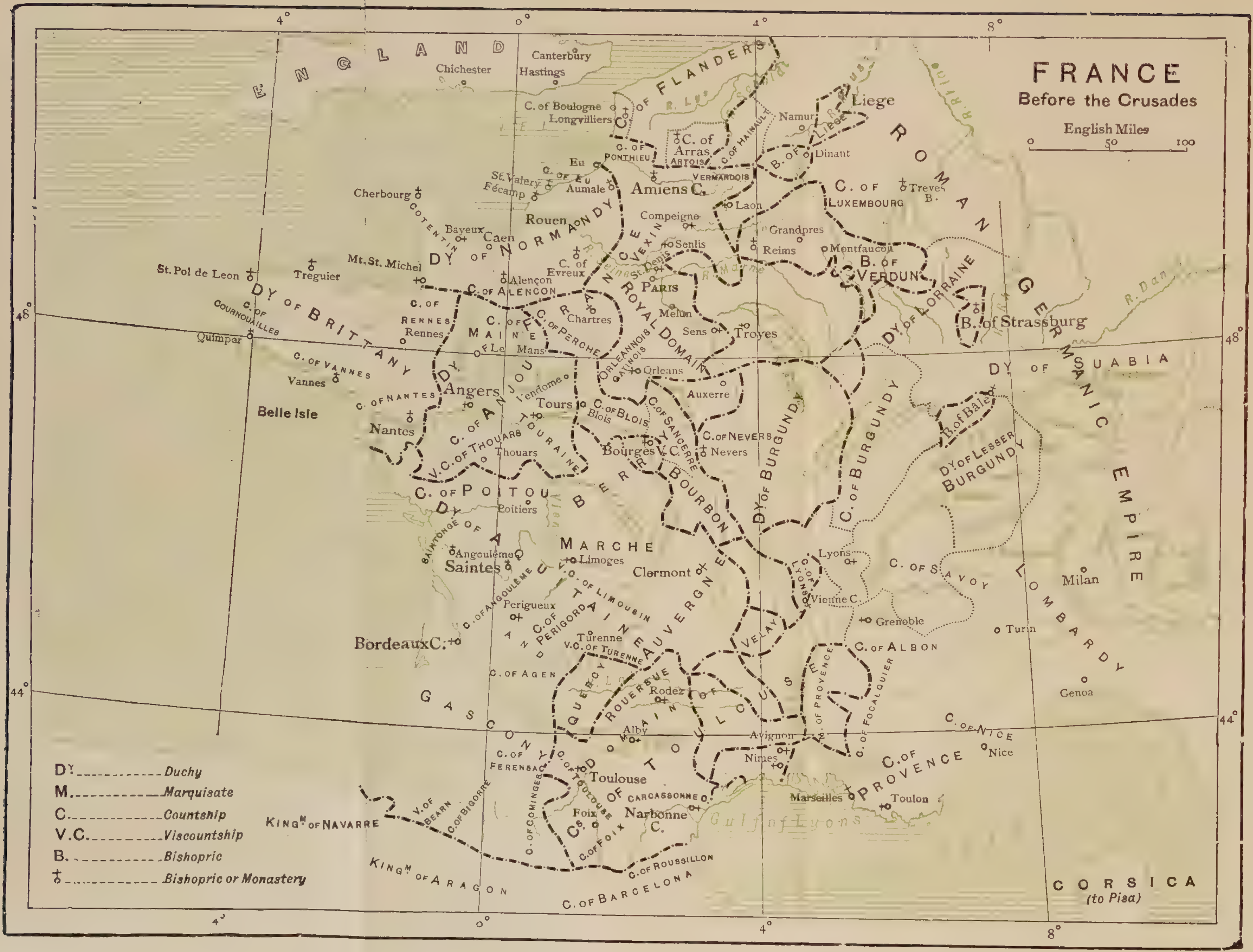
[2] Let us note, however, that John the Scot—Scotus Erigena—who lived at the court of Charles the Bald, was a man of surprising genius as a mystic theologian.

We have no axe to grind, be it Celtic, Roman, or Frankish. We have already expressed our opinion that France is predominantly a northern nation; the Teutonic element was strong in Gaul before the invasions. We readily admit that the Barbarians were excellent raw material for civilization, although some of them were very slow in learning; and Charlemagne, for instance, four hundred years after the irruption of his people into the Roman world, was scarcely able to write. We believe that it is time for history to get away from the Romantic Teutomania of the nineteenth century; but we do not want to go to the other extreme and assert that the invasions were an unmitigated evil. *We do not know.* We are in the presence of an equation with three unknown quantities. Rome was steadily declining: would that decadence have proceeded unchecked into senile coma, or were there in the provinces, particularly in the West, most particularly in Gaul, elements of regeneration? Would not Christianity alone have ultimately redeemed the Empire? Or would the traditions of Judea, Hellas, and Rome have proved powerless, if hordes of "fierce blond beasts" had not swooped upon the West? Who can tell?

The experiment has not been tried, and the field remains open for fantastic speculation. In sober fact this much seems to be proved: the coming of the Barbarians was followed by five hundred years of Barbarism. After this refreshing bath there emerged a new civilization, which cannot be called purely Roman, and which cannot be called purely Teutonic either; it is European. To this Pan-European culture, Germany, herself a hybrid, had made invaluable contributions, but not more priceless than those of other and more obviously mixed nations, England, France, Italy. The Renaissance destroyed the equilibrium and made modern civilization, in the main, much more Greco-Latin than Teutonic. The Romantic rebellion did splendid service against the prevailing Greco-Latin idolatry. But we have not dragged Zeus from his throne in order to restore Odin.

PART II

THE MIDDLE AGES


FRANCE
Before the Crusades
English Miles
0
50
100
ENGLAND
Chichester
Canterbury
Hastings
C. of Boulogne
Longvilliers
C. OF FLANDERS
R. Lys
R. Scheldt
C. of Arras
ARTOIS
C. OF HAINAULT
VERMANDOIS
C. OF PONTHIEU
Namur
Liege
B. of Liege
B. OF Dinant
Dinant
R. Meuse
R. Rhine
ROMAN GERMANIC EMPIRE
C. OF LUXEMBOURG
Treves B.
Eu
C. OF EU
St. Valery
Fecamp
Aumale
Amiens C.
Laon
Cherbourg
COTENTIN
Bayeux
Caen
Rouen
DY OF NORMANDY
Compeigne
VEXIN
Senlis
Grandpres
Reims
Montfaucon
B. OF VERDUN
DY OF LORRAINE
B. of Strassburg
R. Danube
St. Pol de Leon
Treguier
Mt. St. Michel
C. of Evreux
St. Denis
PARIS
R. Seine
R. Marne
Alençon
C. OF ALENCON
C. OF RENNES
Rennes
C. OF MAINE
Le Mans
C. OF PERCHE
Chartres
Melun
ROYAL DOMAIN
Sens
Troyes
C. OF CORNOUAILLES
DY OF BRITTANY
Quimper
C. OF VANNES
Vannes
Belle Isle
C. OF NANTES
Nantes
Angers
C. OF ANJOU
Vendome
Tours
TOURAINE
C. OF BLOIS
Blois
ORLEANOIS
GATINOIS
Orleans
Auxerre
C. OF SANCERRE
C. OF NEVERS
Nevers
DY OF BURGUNDY
C. OF BURGUNDY
DY OF SUABIA
B. of Bale
DY. OF LESSER BURGUNDY
V.C. OF THOUARS
Thouars
Bourges V.C.
BERRY
BOURBON
C. OF POITOU
Poitiers
R. Vienne
DY OF AQUITAINE
SAINTONGE
Angoulême
Saintes
MARCHE
Limoges
Clermont
AUVERGNE
Lyons
LYONNAIS
Vienne C.
C. OF SAVOY
Milan
LOMBARDY
EMPIRE
C. OF ANGOULEME
V.C. OF LIMOUSIN
Perigueux
C. OF PERIGORD
Turenne
V.C. OF TURENNE
VELAY
Grenoble
Turin
Bordeaux C.
C. OF AGEN
QUERCY
ROUERGUE
Rodez
C. OF ALBON
C. OF PROVENCE
C. OF FOCALQUIER
GASCONY
Alby
DUCHY OF TOULOUSE
Avignon
Nimes
C. OF NICE
Nice
Genoa
C. OF FERENSAC
Toulouse
C. OF TOULOUSE
C. OF CARCASSONNE
C. OF PROVENCE
Marseilles
Toulon
V. OF BEARN
C. OF BIGORRE
C. OF COMINGES
Foix
C. OF FOIX
Narbonne C.
Gulf of Lyons
KINGM OF NAVARRE
KINGM OF ARAGON
C. OF ROUSSILLON
C. OF BARCELONA
CORSICA
(to Pisa)
DY .... Duchy
M. .... Marquisate
C. .... Countship
V.C. .... Viscountship
B. .... Bishopric
♁ .... Bishopric or Monastery
4°
0°
4°
8°
48°
44°

BOOK I

THE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: A SURVEY OF THE PERIOD

§ 1. INDEFINITENESS OF "FRANCE" IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

OUT of the double chaos of Roman decay and Barbaric invasion there had slowly arisen a new order, which reached its rough perfection under Charlemagne. There were still in it recognizable survivals of the Roman world; but its main foundations were Western Christianity and the military supremacy of the Franks. This first Renaissance hardly survived the great Emperor. Within a century and a half of his death the Frankish Empire had fallen to pieces, monarchy was all but obliterated, former officials had become hereditary and independent, the substance of power had passed into the hands of innumerable chieftains.

The election of Hugh Capet to the French throne in 987 cannot be considered as a political revolution. For a whole century the western part of the Frankish dominions —*Francia Occidentalis*—had been in dispute between the Carolingians and the descendants of Robert the Strong. Nor can we see in it the evidence of any national feeling—the conscious separation of two great ethnic groups. There had been a vague "Francia," which meant the realm of the Franks; there was later a Duchy of France, between the Seine and the Loire, which was the personal domain of the Capetians; but France in any modern sense of the term did not exist in 987.

We have to bear in mind this indefiniteness of the French region when we study French civilization in the Middle Ages. Thanks to the predominance of Latin and to the existence of innumerable dialects, it is extremely difficult to draw a sharp line between neighbouring cultures. Anglo-Norman literature, for instance, is more closely related to that of Northern France than is Provençal. The political boundaries are just as shifting and uncertain. The actual power of the French king was almost nihil outside of his own restricted estate; his theoretical suzerainty, until the middle of the fourteenth century, did not extend beyond the right bank of the Rhône. Lyons itself remained for centuries a city of the Empire. Burgundy and Lorraine, terms of ever-changing connotation, were vacillating between the French and the German spheres, and it seemed likely, at one time, that they would reconstitute a third independent group, as in the days of Lothair. The continental possessions of the English kings were part of the French political system only in the most shadowy fashion; the great city of Bordeaux remained continuously under English rule from 1154 to 1453. Southern France was a different world altogether, even after its ruthless conquest by the northern crusaders of Montfort. The Duke of Brittany was, in fact, independent, and his land did not finally revert to the French crown until the end of the fifteenth century. On the other hand, the nominal authority of the French king extended over territories which are no longer part of modern France—over Flanders as far as the left bank of the Scheldt, over the Spanish March as far as Barcelona, and even over Navarre for nearly a hundred years.

"France" in the tenth century was not even an intelligible geographical expression, like Italy before 1859. It was not nature, race, the desire or the interest of the people, that made one nation out of Bretons, Gascons, and Lorrainers: it was history. It might be excessive to say that the Capetian dynasty *created* France, since all the elements were at hand; but it did provide the indispensable centre of crystallization. The royal domain, monarchical power, patriotic consciousness, grew together and inseparably. In so far as it is possible to write a connected history of France in the Middle Ages, one must trace the steps of this threefold evolution. The acquisition of a new province, the creation of a new organ of government, the first gleam of national sentiment—these are the facts that loom large in our eyes, because they have moulded the France that we know. But contemporaries had a different perspective. The most distinctive traits in mediæval civilization are not those that still survive, but those which have passed away. If we begin this rapid survey of the period with a sketch of its political history, it is therefore merely in order to provide a convenient framework of dates. The monarchy shaped the nation: but mediæval civilization was neither monarchical nor even national.

§ 2. ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES. CRUSADES. FIRST CONFLICTS WITH ENGLAND.

The royal domain, monarchical power, national consciousness: all three were singularly weak in 987. The story of the first Capetians is soon told. They managed to exist in their small duchy between Seine and Loire. They were in theory "first among the peers": in practice they were liable to be defied and thwarted by any minor baron whose castle happened to command the high road between two royal cities. Yet they had three things in their favour. Their title, shorn of all real significance, was still the symbol of memories and hopes, vague but dynamic. They held, with Paris and Orleans, a strategic position the importance of which has already been indicated. They preserved the traditional alliance of the monarchy with the Church: the abbey of Saint Denys, for instance, was a constant supporter of the dynasty, and Abbot Suger the able adviser of Louis VI and Louis VII. Then the Capetians were fortunate enough to have male heirs who could be elected and associated to the crown in their father's lifetime. Thus, in a few generations, the elective principle, which proved such a source of weakness to Germany and Poland, became a memory; heredity prevailed, and there lives to-day a prince who can legitimately claim the throne of France as the descendant of Hugh Capet.

The tenth and eleventh centuries were an age of anarchy, famine, and pestilence, of which many lurid pictures have been drawn. Yet, by the side of superstitious terror and abject misery, the period offered a wonderful display of vitality. Hardly any age better deserves the hackneyed title of Renaissance: yet it is almost impossible to analyze the causes of this undeniable revival. The Normans, now thoroughly assimilated to the French, had not lost their roving, conquering spirit; they sallied forth from their new duchy, subjugating Sicily and England. The whole world, in Raoul Glaber's famous phrase, clothed itself anew in a white cloak of churches. These two elements—the love of adventure and the Christian faith—united in sending forth multitudes to the first crusade.

In those great movements the French population took a leading part, but not the French kings. Philip I, who was on the throne when William conquered England, and Godfrey of Bouillon delivered Jerusalem, is unknown to fame. Even Louis VI the Fat, an able ruler, was absorbed in petty struggles with his neighbours. Louis VII, Philip-Augustus, Saint Louis, led expeditions against the infidels, but with indifferent success. The French monarchy had already been drawn, however, into what might be called, by a bold anticipation, international politics. The Norman Conquest, in 1066, had created a paradoxical situation: France had now a vassal much more powerful than herself. When Alienor of Guienne, divorced by Louis VII, married Henry Plantagenet, the odds were still more heavily against the nominal sovereign. The result was a protracted conflict (1152-1259), which on the whole ended in favour of France, and has sometimes been called the First Hundred Years' War.

§ 3. HEYDAY OF CAPETIANS UNDER PHILIP-AUGUSTUS AND SAINT LOUIS.

The thirteenth century, with Philip-Augustus and Saint Louis, marks the heyday of the direct Capetian line. Both in power and in prestige its progress was enormous. Philip-Augustus was more than a match for the choleric and unsteady Richard Cœur-de-Lion, or for the craven and crafty John Lackland. He managed to snatch from the English King the bulk of his continental possessions. The growing importance of the dynasty is well shown by the formidable coalition which was formed against Philip: King John, the Count of Flanders, and Otto IV, the German Emperor. These he signally defeated at Bouvines in 1214. Although the support of the Communal Militia may have been overrated, there was in the rejoicing caused by that victory a first anticipatory tinge of national sentiment. For England this rebuff was a blessing, for it counts among the direct causes of Magna Charta.

The heresy of the Albigenses served as a pretext to the northern barons for leading a crusade against Languedoc; and the lands of the Counts of Toulouse, which hitherto had boasted political independence and a culture more refined than that of the north, passed under the sway of King Louis VIII (1223-1226).

The barons, conscious of the growth of a power which was overshadowing theirs, took advantage of the minority of King Louis IX to rebel; but the regent, the Queen-Mother Blanche of Castile, held her own, and turned over the royal power unimpaired to her son. Louis IX settled for the time the age-long conflict between France and England, both by victory (Taillebourg and Saintes) and by agreement (Treaty of Paris, 1259). He restored of his own free will those conquests of his predecessors which he did not deem legitimate. Louis was a valiant warrior and a good administrator; but his chief service to his line and country was his renown for Christian virtue. The "customs" and coinage of good King Louis remained standards for ages to come. In the long eclipse of the Empire his saintliness rather than his power made him the first secular character in Christendom. His prestige enhanced, but did not create, the supremacy enjoyed by French culture in the middle of the thirteenth century: never again was it so complete, even under Louis XIV. French was already, in the words of Brunetto Latini, "the most delectable language, and the most widely spread among all people." The University of Paris was the greatest centre of theological studies. Gothic art, so-called, had spread from the cities of the royal domain to all parts of Europe. But Louis was the last, as well as the most perfect, flower of royal chivalry. His crusades, which did not meet the approval of his more worldly counsellors, were not popular movements, but personal undertakings. The saintly King was already an anachronism. Both his expeditions ended in failure. Louis died a prisoner in Tunis, 1270.

§ 4. False Dawn of the Modern State: Philip the Fair.

No contrast could be more striking than that between Saint Louis and his second successor, Philip IV the Fair. Instead of virtues, justice, honesty—the good King adjusting differences, in gentleness and equity, under the spreading oak of Vincennes—we find craft, violence, the iniquitous mockery of the prosecution against the Knights Templars, the constant tampering with, and debasement of, the royal currency. Instead of a sovereign who was a firm and self-respecting, but respectful, son of the Church, we have one whose envoy slapped an aged Pope in the face, and who, forcing the election of a French bishop to the Holy See, made him almost a chaplain of the French crown. But this reign of financial embarrassment, unscrupulous makeshifts, and fitful violence was also strangely modern in a less disreputable sense. The Roman conception of the sovereign as the source and embodiment of law was revived and expounded by the King's jurists. The purely feudal principle lost its vigour. An institution which is one of the great "might-have-beens" of history, the States-General, came into existence. After 1300 mediæval civilization was a thing of the past; yet it lingered on for two puzzling and dreary centuries, until the light of the Renaissance was manifest to every eye.

The wasteful, tormented reign of Philip the Fair, with its gleams of a strong and none too lovely future, was followed in rapid succession by the reigns of his three sons, all of whom, as though under a curse, died in their prime and without male issue. By a bold application of the Salic law, according to which no woman could inherit the Frankish throne, the claims that Edward III of England held from his mother were set aside, and Philip of Valois was proclaimed King. This conflict was the cause of the most disastrous struggle in French history, the Hundred Years' War.

§ 5. First Period of the Hundred Years' War.

The first two Valois kings had neither the feudal virtues of the great exemplar of their race, Louis IX, nor the groping sense of the modern state which partly redeems Philip the Fair. They were knights in externals only; they displayed the personal bravery, the prodigality, and the childish ignorance of common men-at-arms; and their opponent, Edward III, was an able sovereign, leading a nation. After inconclusive warfare about side issues—Flanders and Brittany—England and France grappled directly at last. Philip was defeated by a much smaller army at Cressy in 1336, and lost Calais. John was even more ignominiously beaten at Poitiers in 1346, and captured. Bands of pillaging soldiers, of doubtful nationality and shifting allegiance, were roaming throughout the land. To complete the tale of horror, the Black Death swept away one-third of the French population. The Jacques or peasants rose in wild revolt, burning castles and murdering nobles, as they had so often seen their own huts destroyed and their brothers slain. The Dauphin (heir apparent) Prince Charles, regent during his father's captivity, had to summon the States-General, and the *bourgeoisie*, under the Provost of Parisian Merchants, Etienne Marcel, imposed upon him a veritable constitution. Marcel, however, was but indifferently supported by the more substantial of his townsmen. He was driven to an understanding with the Jacques, and with Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, a sinister figure flitting adventurously between the French and the English parties. The great Provost was denounced as a traitor, and slain by supporters of the Dauphin. The Jacques' revolt was ferociously put down, the States-General proved abortive, and, by the treaty of Brétigny, one-third of France was signed away. King John was released from captivity; but, unable to fulfil all the stipulations of the treaty, he gave himself up to the English again, and died in London.

Charles V, a weak-bodied, scholarly, shrewd, and kindly prince, aided by the military talent of his Breton constable, Duguesclin, tired the British out, and, without any brilliant victories, freed the whole land with the exception of only five cities. When he died, his son Charles VI was a child of twelve. The uncles of the new King, dismissing the "Marmosets" or bourgeois advisers of Charles V, squandered his hoard and oppressed the people. Paris and Flanders rose against their misrule, but in vain. As soon as he came of age, Charles VI attempted to renew the good traditions of his father; but he was struck with madness, and his uncle resumed the course of their maladministration (1392).

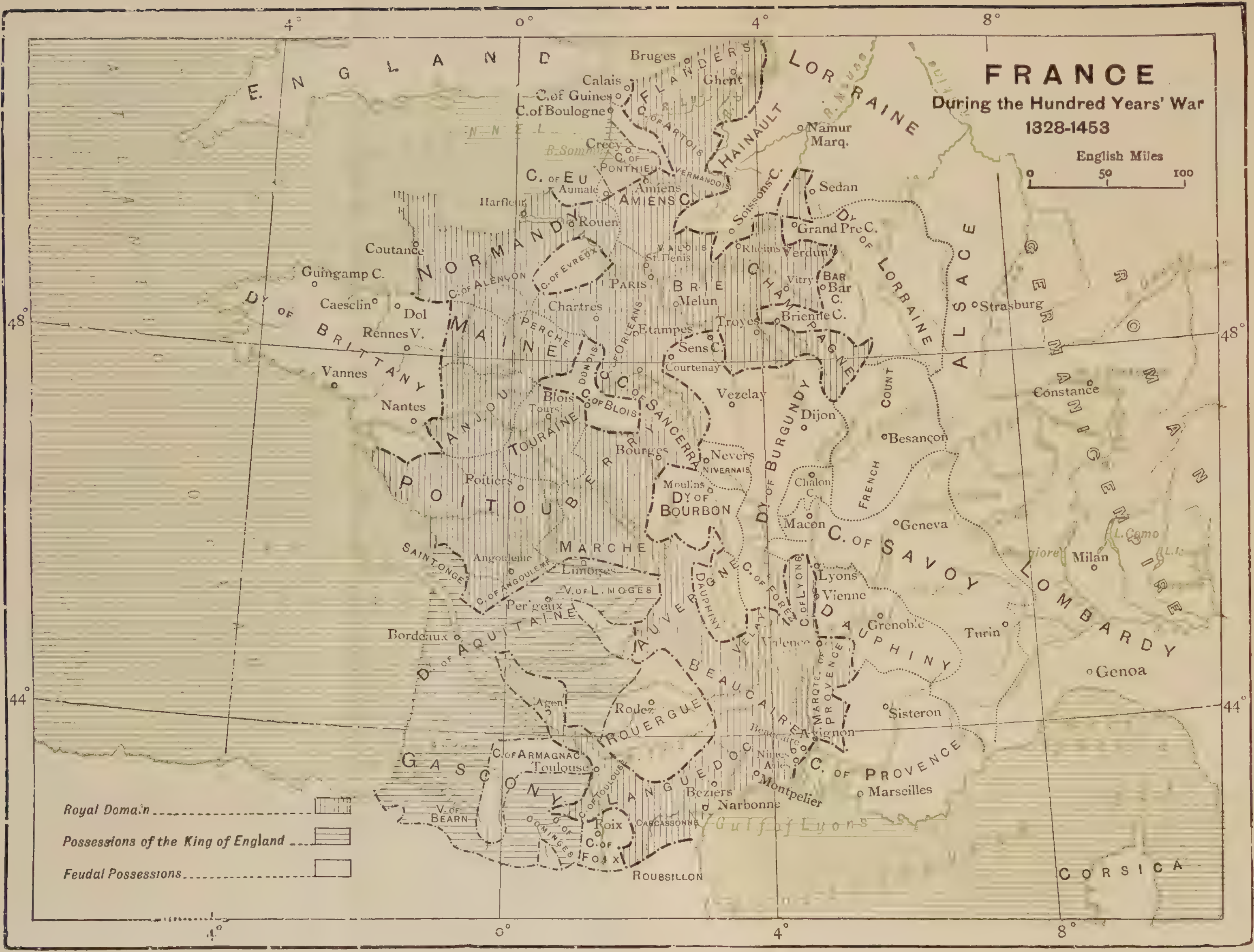
An insane king, a corrupt queen, and factions fighting for the spoils of the land: such was the story of the next generation. The Duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless, had his rival, Orleans, assassinated in 1407. Armagnac rose to avenge Orleans. Paris and the King's person passed by turns under the control of Armagnacs and Burgundians. Massacre was retaliated with massacre.

§ 6. Second Period of the Hundred Years' War.

Under these circumstances, Henry V, eager to give the usurping house of Lancaster the consecration of foreign victories, renewed the French war. The crass inefficiency of the Armagnac nobility gave him a brilliant victory at Agincourt (1415). The strife between Armagnacs and Burgundians was not appeased by the national danger. John the Fearless was assassinated in his turn in 1419. His son immediately struck an alliance with the English. The Queen, Isabeau of Bavaria, sacrificing her son, signed the Treaty of Troyes, which made Henry V the heir to the French throne (1420).

Both the mad French King and the youthful English conqueror died in 1422, and Henry VI, ten months old, was acknowledged King of France by all the official powers, in Paris—the "bourgeoisie," the University, the Parliament. The legitimate heir, however, Dauphin Charles, rallied a few supporters south of the Loire, and was tauntingly called the King of Bourges. He lived in indolence, squandering gaily what little was left of his estate. Then arose out of the border of Lorraine a daughter of the people, a miracle of inspiration and shrewdness, of gentleness and valour, Joan of Arc. The doubting Dauphin and his court of scoffers were carried away by her faith. She gave them the "signs" they had asked for, obtained at last a small army, and in a few days liberated Orleans, the key to Southern France, which the English had been besieging for a whole year. Then she led Charles in triumph to Rheims, where he received the crown of his ancestors (1429). Her miraculous mission was at an end. Urged to remain in the King's service, she was betrayed to the Burgundians at Compiègne, sold to the English, condemned by a Church court as a witch and a heretic, and burned at the stake in Rouen (1431). Charles made no effort to save her, who had lived and died for the King of France and the Catholic faith.

The tide had turned. France was rallying. The Treaty of Arras (1435) effected a reconciliation between the King and the Duke of Burgundy. It was England's turn to be distracted by civil wars. Charles VII, the Well-Served, reorganized his army and his finances. By the battle of Formigny (1450) Normandy was conquered. By that of Castillon Guienne returned to France, after 250 years.



FRANCE
During the Hundred Years' War
1328-1453

Calais was the only French city that remained in the hands of the English.

§ 7. Reconstruction: Louis XI and Charles the Bold.

After a century of ubiquitous warfare, of forays by the English or by nondescript armed bands, of peasant rebellions and feuds between noble factions, the country was utterly exhausted. Louis XI continued the work of reconstruction undertaken by his father. The nobles united against him in a league "of the Public Weal"—a bold misnomer; they were but following the example that he, a rebellious son, had given them under Charles VII. Louis escaped through cunning, pertinacity, and good luck, rather than the force of arms or even of political genius. Only one rival remained formidable, the House of Burgundy, which for a hundred years had been essaying to establish a new Austrasia or a new Lotharingia, independent of either France or Germany. Louis was more than once betrayed by his haste and his oversubtle craftiness: the "universal spider," as he was called, managed to entangle himself in his own web. He was saved from disaster by the blundering fury of his rival Charles the Bold. The "mad bull of Burgundy," defeated by the Swiss, was slain under the walls of Nancy, and Louis secured a part, but only a part, of his heritage. Louis grew more crafty, suspicious, superstitious, and cruel as death, the thought of which filled him with craven and insane dread, was closing upon him. In his contempt for the trappings and also for the virtues of chivalry, in his love for absolute authority and political intrigue, in his reliance upon middle-class advisers, in his genuine capacity for organization, the mean-looking old man at Plessis-lès-Tours was no longer a mediæval king. By the time of his death (1483) the Turks had already been over thirty years in Constantinople, the printing press was in operation, and the Italian Renaissance in full swing. The expeditions of Charles VIII beyond the Alps ushered in a new age.

Just as the traditions of the Early Middle Ages cling most fondly to the personality of Louis IX, the perfect knight and gentle saint, the fifteenth century, a time of lurid contrasts, is most fittingly symbolized by Louis XI. The classical serenity of the thirteenth century is gone: the age is romantic like a stormy evening sky. It was the time of flamboyant architecture, rich and tormented, in which stone was made to writhe like a flame; amid the appalling distress of the nation it was a time of lavish luxury, the great nobles, Burgundy, Orleans, Berry, vying with each other in riotous display; it was the time when true chivalry was at its lowest ebb, and when its externals became more elaborate and more consciously picturesque than ever before; an age of mysticism, superstition, and free-thought; opening with Froissart, closing with Villon; aptly sung by Walter Scott and Victor Hugo; morbid, decadent, but with promises of splendid rebirth.

§ 8. Chief Characteristics of the Middle Ages.

Such was, in its roughest outlines, the story of mediæval France. But the essential traits of the period are not to be found in the territorial or governmental development of the national state. Political history and civilization are never co-extensive: in the Middle Ages they had less in common than they have to-day.

(*a*) *Christianity.*

The dominant characteristic of the age was *Christianity.* Mediæval France was not primarily monarchical France, or feudal France, but the French province of Christendom.[1] As late as the reign of Charlemagne the Church had lived, to a certain extent, under the shadow of the Roman or of the German Empire: she had to recognize a power older and vaster than her own. In France, and long before the year 1000, there was no trace left of such dualism. The Roman Empire was but a memory; the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation was a foreign power, which was neither respected nor feared. The Church, on the contrary, was real. Not only had she the words of eternal life, but she owned huge tracts of land, governed cities, collected tithes, had her own tribunals, disciplined laymen, even the King himself, and enjoyed a monopoly of culture. No doubt she was deeply influenced by the evils of the time; she was gross and corrupt, and had repeatedly to be reformed. She was combated from without, incessantly, by the barons with their swords, by the common people with their tongues, for there never was a more bitterly anticlerical age than that age of faith. She had to repress heresies, and was torn by schism. She was compelled to adapt herself to the feudal system, until she was in danger of being engulfed by it. She was too often the tool of the King. But it is truer still that she pervaded all the forms of life; that the King was no true king until she anointed him; that the one great collective undertaking of the time was the Crusade; that knighthood was the warrior's life consecrated by the Christian spirit; that the roughest soldiery was curbed many a time by the "truce of God"; that the life of guilds and crafts was not complete without a religious brotherhood under the protection of a saint; that the incarnation of "national" sentiment, Joan of Arc, was first of all a Christian girl called by the voices of angels; that the one perfect product the age has left us —one of the few supreme achievements of the race—is the cathedral.

---

[1] In modern parlance, "la section française de l'Internationale chrétienne."

(*b*) *Feudalism.*

Next in importance was the feudal system. It, too, pervaded the whole period. There were hardly any free estates left that did not fall within its elaborate hierarchy. It imposed its principles and its forms upon institutions of totally different origins and character. An abbot, a bishop, became feudal lords; a free city, too, was a sort of collective baron, with its seal, its arms, and its banner, and a belfry instead of a keep. The King himself was but the cope-stone of the feudal edifice, the liege lord, the universal suzerain.

Feudalism arose in the anarchy of Carolingian decadence: authority became a property, and property conferred authority. This rallying round a few strong men may have been inevitable in the wild tenth century. But by the time feudalism had become fully established, it had already outlived whatever usefulness it may once have possessed: it was but a system of abusive privileges, based on force and custom. Throughout the Middle Ages proper, in spite of brilliant appearances, feudalism was a regressive element.

At the end nothing but its evils had survived—with one redeeming point only: the conscious picturesqueness in which Froissart revels. Feudalism, too, had its forms of culture; the epic, the love-lyric, the romance of chivalry, the best of the chronicles, had the nobles for their subject, for their public, and, in not a few cases, for their authors as well. The feudal castles became palaces as well as fortresses, stored with precious works of art.

(c) *The City, Commune, and Craft.*

The third element is the city spirit—we hardly dare to call it urban democracy. It evolved an order also, influenced in externals only by the Church and by feudalism, often in sharp conflict with both: in the political sphere, the Commune; in the economic, the Craft. But the cities were unable to unite all the elements within their walls, or to combine among themselves, and least of all to co-operate with another order, as the English Commons united with the Lords. Their erstwhile protector, the King, curtailed their privileges. In the days of their independence there was a culture born of the city spirit: the beautiful town halls and guild houses are its masterpieces; it was manifested also through a generous participation in the building of churches, and, at the other pole of the human spirit, through a mocking realistic literature, of a type which survives to the present day.

(d) *The Monarchy.*

Last, and for a time least, the Monarchy. This was a composite institution in its apparent simplicity. The king was the heir of Rome and of the Barbarians—the leader of warriors and the symbol of law; he was also the Lord's anointed; the supreme feudal suzerain; the protector of the communes. He was especially, in spite of individual weaknesses, the representative of unity and order—great Roman ideas which had never been quite forgotten, and which the spiritual unity of the Church helped to keep alive. The French monarch, originally "first among his peers," always lived as a nobleman among noblemen; but essentially he was the ally of the Church and of the middle class, against the common people, who remained deprived of any share in the government, and against the nobles, who were reduced to gilded impotence. Louis XI, with his "gossips," gives a truer picture of the French monarchy than John the Good wielding his battle-axe at Poitiers.

§ 9. The End of the Middle Ages.

Until the thirteenth century, these four elements developed, not without friction of course, but without vital conflict. It seemed as though, under Louis IX, a state of society had been reached which was essentially Christian, feudal, and monarchical, whilst allowing freedom of growth to the civic and economic democracies. Just at that time, under the saintly King, Gothic art and mediæval French reached their perfection; the University of Paris was at the height of its prestige; Thomas Aquinas was summing up the whole of the Christian faith. It is a unique moment when the Middle Ages are, so to speak, in focus; and the picture they make, varied and harmonious, graceful and majestic, is singularly attractive indeed.

Almost immediately the unequal growth of the different elements destroyed their balance. Both feudalism and the guilds became hardened into caste systems for the selfish perpetuation of wealth and power, rather than organizations for service. Cities lost their vitality. The central power, on the contrary, was growing apace.

Still Christianity remained the one central principle. The Middle Ages ended with the absolute supremacy of the Catholic Church. The Christian Commonwealth, long a mere shadow, ceased to exist even in name, and gave place to the nations. These, whose *raison d'être* was "sacred egotism," could not unite to reconquer Jerusalem or save Constantinople. His most Christian Majesty King Francis I allied himself with the Turks, and the best monarch of the new age, Henry IV, was lauded for frankly subordinating his religious preferences to national reconciliation.

This estrangement between the Church and national policy was but the result of a more radical divorce, that between the Christian tradition and modern culture. The Reformation was not a break with the Middle Ages: there had been many such attempts before. The Renaissance was. Antiquity had never ceased to be known and revered, but the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries brought in a new spirit. In its humanistic form it simply ignored or spurned the whole Christian era, and went back to Pagan sources. In its scientific aspect it studied nature for its own sake, and resented the trammels of dogma. Hitherto the Church had been the chief repository of culture; henceforth she will no longer be a leader; by many she will be considered as an obstacle. This revolution marks the end of the Middle Ages.

It should be borne in mind, however, that mediæval civilization, although superseded, did not end in senile decay like that of Rome. Flamboyant Gothic and fifteenth-century French may not have the perspicuity and repose of the great period: but to brand as decadent the portal of Tours, the poetry of Villon, the prose of Commynes, or the sculpture of the Burgundian school would be arrant nonsense. It would be rash to assert that mediæval culture had led France into a cul-de-sac. On the contrary, it might be contended that it still had within itself germs of progress which did not need the quickening touch of Greece and Italy. Perhaps there is a fundamental injustice about the very word *Renaissance*: a truer name for the sixteenth century would be, the age of *Expansion*.

§ 10. COMPLEXITY OF MEDIÆVAL CIVILIZATION.

With its four main elements, Church, Feudalism, Cities, and Monarchy, all full of life, not seldom at odds, each in constant evolution, each reacting upon the others, mediæval civilization is one of baffling complexity. Even the Church, with her varied secular and regular chapters, her rich growth of orders, wealthy or poor, fighting or preaching, isolated or united in vast confederacies, had not the logical simplicity of structure which she attained—or was reduced to—at the time of the counter-Reformation. Feudalism is a swarming chaos of rights and customs, so curiously divided at each transmission of heritage, so inextricably entangled, that a lord might be his vassal's vassal. There are many types of city charters, and innumerable varieties within each type. The jurisdiction of a city may extend beyond its walls; but within, a whole district, or a street, or a house, may belong to the bishop or to some other lord; the King's men retain their personal privileges; the members of the University form a separate community, under its own rules.

The statutes of each guild, as recorded, for instance, in Etienne Boileau's *Book of* (*Parisian*) *Crafts*, are but a loose collection of customs, valid only for one city and at one particular time. Although the monarchy evolved a system and a tradition, its supreme law remained individual caprice, checked by Christian scruples, feudal intrigues, or rebellion. The Middle Ages were as fond of abstract doctrines and logical deduction as the eighteenth century: indeed, the Rousseauistic "Rights of Man" were proclaimed by King Louis X in 1315. But in practice there was but one rule: to respect vested interests, that is to say any privilege, based on service, agreement, force, or fraud that had managed to pass into "custom."

We have to be satisfied with a rough indication of this intensity of life, this frequency of change, this luxuriance of forms; they cannot adequately be conveyed in a rapid survey such as the present book. They were but the mirror of the mediæval mind, in which all contrasts were so strangely compacted—senility and childishness, Teutonic and Roman strains, logic and fancy, allegory and literalism, otherworldliness and materialism. Can such a mind be analyzed in terms of modern psychology? Was there in it some magic that we have lost, or have we learned a new secret? Perhaps no amount of knowledge will ever enable us to settle such complex questions. Specialists would spurn them as irrelevant; and yet, unless it brings them appreciably nearer to a solution, erudition is nought but a morose pastime.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE MIDDLE AGES

§ 1. Spiritual Greatness of the Middle Ages.

The outstanding feature of the Middle Ages is the supremacy of the Christian faith and of the Catholic Church. The Pope, not the Emperor, was the veritable overlord of Western Europe. The humiliation of Henry IV at Canossa (1077) was but the dramatic confirmation of this fact. In France, at any rate, it is hard to find any trace even of the purely nominal suzerainty of the Emperor, whilst the power of the Church was an ever-present and all-pervading reality. When the " seamless coat " was rent at last, when the Christian tradition ceased to be the paramount influence in Western culture, the Middle Ages came to an end.

Nothing would be more misleading than to imagine the Church—primitive, mediæval, or modern—as a changeless rock. Changeless means lifeless. A great cathedral is the obvious symbol of the faith that erected it. The wonderful structure creates an impression of harmonious unity, because a single spirit guided the many generations of its builders. But there were countless changes of plans ; several successive styles were used ; certain parts collapsed, others were patched up, others still were never finished at all. In the details we find the wildest luxuriance and not a few incongruities. From portal to topmost pinnacle there swarms a whole population of saints and demons, angels and chimeras, in eternal conflict. The Church is an edifice built, not by hands alone, of stone, blood, and dreams.

The faith of the Middle Ages was abundantly mixed with corruption, ignorance, and cruelty. Of this there is ample record, but not more ample than the record of Christian virtue. Both are historical : why is it that evil seems so much more " historical " than good ? Even such a scholar as M. A. Luchaire would create the impression that the blemishes of mediæval Christianity affected its very essence. Yet no other age has so passionately longed for purity and charity. There was much groping and stumbling and wandering astray. But the simple faith of Count Roland in the old poem—who, dying, hands his glove to the angel of God as to his liege; the militant life of Saint Bernard; the career of Saint Francis—a prodigious idyl; the quiet holiness of Saint Louis; the crowning miracle of Joan of Arc: such achievements prove that mediæval Christianity did not strive wholly in vain. If other periods, too, had their heroes and their saints, none could match the Middle Ages in the depth and intensity of the two fundamental religious experiences: the conviction of sin and the haunting sense of a world beyond. It was the age of great penitents—strong, wild natures hardening themselves in evil, and, under the touch of grace, melting with dramatic suddenness. Not to such converts alone, but to multitudes, this life became in sooth a pilgrimage. The religious greatness of the Middle Ages is all the more striking when compared with the irremediable mediocrity of the Roman world at the time of Augustus.

§ 2. HERESIES.

There was no change in the creed. Theology, a product of the Greek spirit, remains somewhat alien to the blunter Western mind. All the great dogmas and all the great heresies have arisen in the East. There is no originality in Thomas Aquinas. The endless disputations of scholasticism are variations on the data of earlier theology, exercises in formal logic, even adumbrations of reviving rationalism; in creative power they are found wanting. Restless spirits, ardent souls, energetic leaders who at other times would have become heresiarchs, found scope for their activity in the monastic life and in the crusades. No doubt repressive measures were used in the defence of orthodoxy: King Robert the Pious was among the first to burn heretics, and Louis IX, the gentle saint, was ruthless against blasphemers. We shall see with what ferocity Catharism was put down in the south. But as a rule it does not seem that the Church had to rely upon measures of terrorism to maintain her theological unity. Her most vexing problems were of a different order.

The Waldensians.

Among the several minor dissenting movements in the Middle Ages, one of the most interesting was that of the Waldensians, or Poor People of Lyons. A rich merchant of that city, Peter of Vaux, or Valdez, or Waldo, gave away his property, had the Bible translated into the common tongue (Romance), and started preaching a simpler, more apostolic Christianity (*c.*1173). He was excommunicated, joined forces with an earlier and somewhat similar sect, the Petrobrusians, and died in Bohemia. The Waldensians survived, particularly in the upper valleys of Piedmont. When the great Reformation of the sixteenth century broke out, most of these obscure pioneers rallied to the wider movement. It seems that their earlier literature was tampered with at that time, in an effort to reconstitute an unbroken chain of " witnesses " from the age of the primitive Church to the days of Luther. Their renewed sufferings in the seventeenth century inspired Milton's stately sonnet :

> Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
> Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold ;
> Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
> When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
> Forget not . . .

There are still some twenty thousand of them in existence, the most ancient of the Western sects.

The Albigensians.

The Cathars (from Katharoi, the pure) or Albigensians had little in common with the Waldensians, except that both divided the faithful into the common flock or Believers and the initiated or Perfect. Their faith was manifestly of Oriental origin—either by some obscure filiation with the early Gnostic and Manichean sects, or by direct importation through a Bulgarian invasion.[1] Our knowledge of them is extremely imperfect, as it is derived almost entirely from their persecutors. Catharism was a complex of related movements rather than a definite sect. The common basis of their belief was Manichean dualism—the existence of two principles, one good, the other evil. The evil principle was Jehovah, father of Lucifer, creator of the visible world, tempter of angels and men, and author of the Old Testament—a very ancient heresy which cropped up again, oddly enough, in nineteenth-century literature, with P. J. Proudhon and Leconte de Lisle. Christ, who only wore the semblance of humanity, came to redeem the elect from carnal bonds. The flesh being wholly evil, marriage was absolutely condemned. There was but one sacrament, a spiritual baptism called *consolamentum*. Only those who had been made "perfect" through its agency were fully subjected to the code of preternatural asceticism of the Cathars. So it was found advisable not to confer it until the faithful was on his death-bed; and after receiving it, certain Cathars were known to allow themselves to starve to death—unable, as they knew themselves to be, to bear the responsibility of the perfect life in a world of sinful flesh. This, the one logical development of asceticism, was called the *endura*. From some of these doctrines many dangerous inferences might be drawn. Extremes of mysticism are apt to leave men's minds precariously balanced. "Qui veut faire l'ange fait la bête," and the flesh has a way of avenging itself on its too radical contemners. At the same time, theoretical dangers could be pointed out in the case of almost any creed—even Predestinarian Calvinism; and the charges of immorality brought against the Albigensians are the same that have been hurled at every new sect, including Primitive Christianity.

---

[1] The word Bougre (Bulgar) originally meant a heretic.

Catharism spread throughout the south of France during the twelfth century. Albi was one of its strongholds, hence the name Albigensians. The culture of Languedoc was at that time quite different from that of the north; it was singularly richer and more refined. The murder of a papal legate by the heretics brought the crisis to a head: Innocent III preached a crusade against them in 1208. Soon, however, this crusade turned into a land-grabbing expedition; the northern barons, under Simon of Montfort, were less eager to defend orthodoxy than to carve estates for themselves out of the rich southern land. The famous words of the Pope's representatives at Béziers: "Kill them all! God will recognize His own!" may be apocryphal; but they well express the ferocity of the struggle. The King of France, who had taken no part in the expedition, was its chief beneficiary: the semi-independent south became an integral part of his dominions.

The Inquisition.

It was in order to deal with this heresy that Innocent III instituted in 1204 a tribunal which, a quarter of a century later, became definitely organized under the redoubtable name of Inquisition. Saint Dominic, the founder of the Preaching Friars, was connected with this terrible instrument of spiritual discipline. The Inquisition in France never became such a scourge as in Spain under Torquemada. But the Church formula "that the accused be turned over to the secular arm, to be treated with all possible gentleness and without shedding of blood" should not be interpreted too literally: clerics were not devoid of a grim sense of humour. Terror reigned in the south. Under Queen Blanche of Castile, mother of Saint Louis, heretics were walled alive at Toulouse. The unity of faith was restored. The political unity of France was considerably advanced. In the process a whole civilization went down.

§ 3. The Virgin and the Saints.

Within the limits of orthodoxy certain changes were proceeding. The worship of the Virgin Mary attained its fullest development. The belief in her Immaculate Conception became firmly established, although it was not defined as a dogma until 1854. An invocation to her was almost indissolubly attached to the Lord's Prayer, and it was her name which at the Angelus of dawn or eventide was felt to breathe a benison over the Christian life. Most of the great cathedrals were dedicated to Our Lady. She performed miracles innumerable, which inspired a whole branch of narrative and dramatic literature. Academic societies or "Puys" were placed under her protection, and dedicated to her praise. Below the adoration, or *latria*, reserved for the Trinity alone, but above the *dulia* accorded to the angels and saints, she received a special worship or *hyperdulia*. This cult of the Virgin Mary may be a form of the yearning for purity, so characteristic of the time; it may have been influenced by Celtic and Germanic traditions; above all, it satisfied the need for an intercessor all-powerful in heaven, yet in close touch with humanity. The human side of Jesus, the Mediator, had been overshadowed by His Godhead: His Mother remained the universal motherly Friend, not bound by inflexible rules of justice, but ever ready with her bountiful grace.

The naïve fetishism of the Middle Ages is well exemplified by the fact that no two "Virgins" had exactly the same powers, and that in the same cathedral, at Chartres, there were two statues of her, both venerated and potent, but with different attributions. For, under the trinitarian monotheism of Christian orthodoxy there was in the popular mind a teeming pantheon of virgins, angels, and saints, the heirs, in many cases, of the long-exiled heathen gods. They came from the depths of heterogeneous traditions, Oriental, Celtic, Gallo-Roman, or Norse. Ernest Renan has a delightful passage about the uncouth old saints of his own Brittany, and the rough methods by which miracles were exacted from them: "If thou dost not heal this child, said the smith to the saint, *I shall shoe thee like a horse*!" Like the classic gods, the angels took sides in national affairs: if Saint George was English in his sympathies, Saint Denys was French, and the Capetians entrusted their war banner to the keeping of his abbey. Saint Nicholas and Saint Martin of Tours were the great favourites, the universal miracle workers, the one from the East, the other from the West. But there were specialists among them: Saint Roch was mighty in time of pestilence, and Saint Christopher against sudden death. For every circumstance in life there was a saint, and every craft had its patron in heaven. Some of these selections seemed to have been made in a spirit of gruesome sportiveness. Saint Bartholomew was the protector of tanners, because he had been flayed alive; and Saint John was invoked by the candlemakers, because he had been plunged in a cauldron of boiling oil. Even the lawyers had their saint, Saint Yves, of whom it was quaintly said:

> "Sanctus Ivo erat Brito,
> Advocatus et non latro:
> Res miranda populo."

Every saint had his invariable attributes, by which he was identified: Saint Denys carried his head in his hands; Saint Christopher, the Christian Hercules, was a colossus, with the Christ-child on his shoulder. Saint Roch was never seen without his dog, nor Saint Anthony without his pig. One animal at least was admitted into the saintly circle, not as a companion, but in his own right: Saint Guinefort, who was a greyhound, and wrought miracles. This blending of heaven and earth, this familiar "communion of the saints," is one of the chief characteristics of the Middle Ages, and one of the most appealing. Rationalism has barred the gate and destroyed the magic ladder—although a few scientists are now claiming that there still filters a ray of light. Hardly any book is more representative of the period than the *Golden Legend*, compiled in the thirteenth century by the Bishop of Genoa, Jacobus de Voragine.

§ 4. Miracles, Relics, Pilgrimages.

No age was ever so fruitful in miracles—many of them recorded with a definiteness which would leave no room for doubt if we were not hopelessly biassed at the start. Saint Bernard, so "historical," so intensely human, could hardly move without miracles being expected of him and ascribed to him. The tomb of Thomas Becket acquired immediately the same power. This thaumaturgy of the saints passed into everything that had been theirs—even a bit of haircloth or a knuckle bone. It has been said that the religion of the Middle Ages was above all the worship of relics. The crown of thorns preserved at St. Denys was the most priceless possession of the great abbey. Although popes, and in particular Innocent III, uttered words of warning,[1] the credulity of the people was boundless, and great was their indignation when the authenticity of their treasures was challenged. There was great rejoicing over the fall of Constantinople in 1204, because "it was hoped that knights and pilgrims would return laden with their share of the sacred spoils, torn from the Byzantine churches." As a matter of fact, a brisk trade in relics was immediately organized, under the protection and guarantee of the Latin Emperor, and for his personal advantage. The first crusade of Louis IX seems to us a lamentable failure: not so to him, for he brought back some wood of the True Cross, for which the Sainte Chapelle was erected. To travel with such treasures, in those wild days, was a perilous adventure. We have several such relations, in particular the story of Canon Galon, who brought from Constantinople to Amiens the head, one arm, and one finger of Saint George, and the face of John the Baptist: no five-reel drama is fuller of thrills.

---

[1] Cf. also the critical attitude of a singularly clear-minded cleric, Guibert of Nogent.

Relics attracted to their shrines great throngs of pilgrims. It was in order to accommodate the crowd of worshippers that the present Abbey of Saint Denys was built—the first of the great Gothic churches. The pilgrimage was an essential feature of mediæval life. It was a panacea for sickness, grief, or guilt. It was also the glorious adventure of a lifetime, full of perils and of spiritual rewards. In France, St. Genevieve, St. Denys, St. Michael's Mount, the Black Virgin of Chartres, Le Puy en Velay, were the principal resorts; in Spain, St. James (Santiago) of Compostella, in Galicia; in Italy, the tomb of Saint Nicholas at Bari, and later, the Santa Casa of Loretto; above all, Rome and the Holy Land. The highways to these great pilgrimages afford the key to much economic and even literary history. M. Bédier has attempted to reinterpret the French epic in terms of these pilgrim routes. The greatest pilgrimage of all, that to Jerusalem, led to the capital events in mediæval history, the Crusades.[1]

§ 5. THE ESSENTIALS:

(a) *The Sense of Sin, the Devil.*

Neither the cumbrous foreign armour of theology nor the rich, fantastic garland of the *Golden Legend* gives us the essentials of mediæval faith. The first of these, as we have said, was the sense of sin. This the imagination of the time, at once boldly allegorical and vigorously realistic, pictured, dreaded, and fought, as a personal enemy, the Devil. The old Tempter assumed gigantic proportions: orthodoxy, which condemned Manicheism, might deny him the name, but, in fact, he was a second God, at war with the Power above. He would be defeated at last—raking off, however, a plentiful booty of souls, to comfort him in his eternal misery; but in this world, and by God's own decree, he was almost supreme. The Christian life, in its supernatural perfection, was beyond the reach of mortal men: the Enemy was lurking everywhere, even in the cell of the studious monk, most of all in the smiles of woman—*janua diaboli*. Insidious, plausible, using legitimate pride and affection as a mask, he was ever ready to snatch you away from the narrow path. Life thus became a long struggle with the Prince of Darkness, in which man would inevitably succumb but for the somewhat capricious assistance of the Virgin and the saints. So great was the Devil, and so real, that short-sighted ambitious men would freely sign a pact with him: the priest Theophilus is the first of a long series which, through Dr. Faust, reaches down to Melmoth the Wanderer. Hundreds of deluded women have confessed to witchcraft and commerce with Satan. Devil-worship came to be a recognized and infectious mental disease.

---

[1] Cf. chap. iv.

But the mediæval mind was not for ever oppressed by morbid fancies. The invincible optimism of the race reasserted itself, even whilst the tragic spiritual conflict was proceeding. It was felt obscurely that the Devil was an essential element in life—disagreeable and dangerous no doubt, like sickness or the fury of the elements, but for which some use might ultimately be discovered. It was felt that good humour was the best weapon against the arch-enemy; familiarity had bred contempt, and the redoubtable tempter was made to cut a sorry figure, for the amusement of the populace. The Devil is the fool as well as the villain in the drama of life. Many popular tales relate with gusto the tricks that Devil and saints have played upon each other, like village neighbours with a somewhat rough sense of fun. The Middle Ages may even have anticipated our modern concern for the ultimate redemption of Satan: what else could the unknown artist have had in mind when he carved the famous Chimera of Notre-Dame with such wistfulness on its bestial face?

(b) *Mysticism.*

The other essential trait of mediæval faith was mysticism. The strain was found already in John the Scot, whose genius shines so strangely in the murk of Carolingian decadence. It never was wholly stifled by ecclesiasticism, school logic, or popular superstition. Mysticism in its purity is ineffable, and can leave no direct record. We may only surmise that many of the monks, like Saint Bruno, fled the world because they wanted to be face to face with God. The vanity of human words had appeared as clearly to the mediæval mind as to our own. Many stories exalt simple faith at the expense of abstruse learning. Alan of Lille, the poet and theologian, had announced that he would expound the mystery of the Trinity in a single lecture; but he saw a child who, with a tiny shell, was trying to empty a flowing river—and he learned his lesson. Neither Saint Bernard nor Saint Francis were logicians. The book which expresses most perfectly the faith of the waning Middle Ages, the *Imitation of Christ*, is free from any trace of scholasticism.

§ 6. GROWTH OF DRAMATIC COMPLEXITY.

Although the dogmas of the Church did not change during the five centuries of the Middle Ages, the spirit of the faith bears evidence of an evolution. In spite of the legend about the terrors of the year 1000, there were in the earlier part of the period a plenitude and a simplicity of belief which are well expressed in the serenity of the Church statuary. The Nativity, the Virgin and the Child, the Crucifixion, are represented with wonderful calm and restraint, not free from hieratic conventionality and stiffness: they are the symbols of dogmatic truths, in which picturesqueness and emotion are not sought. The Friars, with their ardent popular preaching, put a more pulsating life into those great conceptions. Christ lost his smiling majesty: He became more and more the Man of Sorrows, until, in late Burgundian crucifixes, the extremes of ghastly realism are reached. The pathetic group of the Pietà—the Virgin holding the body of her dead Son—was found in every church. The terrible sufferings of the Hundred Years' War deepened this pathetic strain to the point of morbidity. The thought of death, and all the gruesome details of carnal corruption, haunted men's minds as never before. Death's Dance became a favourite theme. This morbidity is revealed in the collective insanity of the Flagellants, scourging themselves throughout Europe, and in the spread of witchcraft and demon-worship. The development of the religious drama reacted upon religious sentiment. A certain straining after effect could be detected, and the farcical elements in the Miracle Plays had their equivalents in the Church itself. The Pope of Fools, the Festival of the Donkey, the Procession of the Herrings, were consciously grotesque elements. All varieties of faith and no-faith are represented in the fifteenth century. Joan of Arc, the peasant girl, was as staunch in her simple belief as Roland or Saint Louis. In the mottled, over-rated mind of Louis XI, the less worthy elements of religious feeling alone seemed to survive—an abject terror of death, and the grossest, most materialistic superstition. "By my soul—if there be one in me," lightly chirps that delightful caged songster, Duke Charles of Orleans. In Villon the shuddering thought of death is deeper than pure Pagan fear, and yet is not Christianity undefiled. In the "Ballad to the Virgin," written for his mother, the element of conscious artistry in the enjoyment of religious sentiment is an adumbration of Chateaubriand's romantic Christianity. In Gilles de Rais, the Breton Blue-Beard, faith was compounded with witchcraft, lust, cruelty, and a sense for beauty —a Nero on a petty scale, or a character for Baudelaire and Oscar Wilde. Yet in that strange period was written the great classic of the inner life and of self-renunciation, the *Imitation of Christ*.

CHAPTER III

THE CLERGY : BISHOPS, MONKS, AND POPES

§ 1. The Secular Clergy under Feudal Influences.

Charlemagne had extended his strong hand over the Church, to protect, but also to rule. The election of bishops by the people had long ceased to be practised ; even the election by the higher clergy had become a mere form : the Emperor's desire was law. When the Carolingian Empire sank into feudal anarchy, it nearly dragged down the Church into the same morass. For clerical preferments, like the other prerogatives of the central power, passed to nobles, great and small, good or bad, but all incredibly ignorant and narrow. With such patrons spiritual considerations availed little, and bishoprics, although still elective in theory and form, were in practice given to younger sons, boon companions, or even frankly to the highest bidder. The first Capetians were, in this respect, no whit better than their vassals. Queen Bertrade met part of her heavy debts by selling ecclesiastical dignities. To a disappointed candidate who complained of these malpractices, King Philip I answered with engaging candour : "Wait till I have had my profit with your competitor ; then try to have him deposed for simony, and we shall see what we can do for you."

Prelates thus recruited evinced, of course, the very worst traits of the baronial caste, ignorance and lawlessness. As they had purchased their see, they tried to recoup themselves through extortions, simony, or downright brigandage. Guifred of Cerdagne, who was Archbishop of Bordeaux for over sixty years (1016-79), trafficked openly in things spiritual, and, at a pinch, would sell church ornaments to the Jews. As late as the reign of Philip Augustus we find an Archbishop of Bordeaux, Hélie I, surrounded by bandits whose profits he was known to share. Matthew of Lorraine, Bishop of Toul from 1198 to 1210, a member of the ducal family, had to be deposed and excommunicated; he held out for eight years in the wooded hills of his whilom bishopric, murdered his successor, and was finally killed by the Duke's own hands.

The evil was all the more dangerous because the celibacy of the priesthood, which is with the Church a matter of discipline and not one of faith, could not be rigorously enforced in the Early Middle Ages: it was difficult enough to prevent concubinage, adultery, and polygamy. Thus there arose priestly families, and it seemed as though bishoprics would become hereditary fiefs like baronies: the Church would thus be totally absorbed by feudalism. Such episcopal dynasties did actually exist, notably in Brittany. The bishops used the same method as the Capetian kings in order to secure the heredity of their title: they had their heirs appointed as their successors in their own lifetime. Thus children could be bishops: the notorious Guifred of Cerdagne attained that dignity at the age of ten. In Gascony, early in the eleventh century, a baron held not one, but eight bishoprics, which he transmitted to his heirs.

Of course, even in the darkest hour, there were great and saintly bishops, like the learned Fulbert of Chartres (1007-29), or the good Maurice of Sully, Bishop of Paris in 1160, a pious, modest, active, charitable divine, to whom is primarily due the present cathedral. But on the whole, the secular clergy—canons and parish priests were no better than their superiors—were tainted with the grossness and corruption of the time. And, in the tenth century, no help could be expected from the Papacy: the popes were obscure Roman nobles, of dissolute and violent habits, and whose elections had to be confirmed by the Emperor. The salvation came through the regular clergy, who had more resolutely broken with the sinful world.

§ 2. THE REGULAR CLERGY: CLUNY AND CITEAUX.

The monks of the West had already fulfilled great tasks. They had tilled the land, they had spread the faith, and they had kept alive a flickering tradition of ancient culture. All the more spiritual and more orderly elements sought the cloister. Monasticism, like all other forms of life, received an extraordinary impetus from the Renaissance of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Although most of the Western monasteries followed the rule of Saint Benedict, each had an independent existence. But the need for federation was felt.

Cluny.

The communities were organized—at times not without resistance—into vast " congregations " or orders, under a single head. This movement originated at Cluny, in Burgundy, a Benedictine abbey created in 910. Under Peter the Venerable (1122-56), the Cluniac order counted 2,000 monasteries, and had become the chief ecclesiastical power in Christendom. Hildebrand (Gregory VII), who did so much to reform the Church, enforce celibacy, check the spread of simony, assert the independence, nay, the supremacy, of the spiritual power, sought his inspiration from Cluny, and found his mainstay in that great organization.[1]

Thus did the Benedictines of Cluny stand for Christianity in all its primitive austerity, although without any morbid asceticism. But to them also did success bring the taint of worldliness—wealth and ambition. The great church at Cluny was the largest in Christendom. The abbey could entertain, at the same time, Pope, King, and Emperor, with their several retinues. The head of the order, styled the Abbot of Abbots, was a magnificent personage. So the Cluniac reform was not thorough-going enough, and had to be carried on by other hands.

Citeaux.

The Cistercians, founded at Citeaux in 1098, attempted once more to restore the early Christian ideal. Their churches were simplicity itself compared with those of Cluny. Soon the Cistercians came to be the leading influence in the church.

---

[1] The abbots of Cluny strove for a veritable unification under their rule of all monastic activities. In this they failed : certain communities remained independent, and other congregations were formed which refused to be absorbed by Cluny. In France, among many others, may be mentioned the Grandmontains, a contemplative order, in which the monks proper came to be outnumbered and overruled by the lay brethren ; the austere Carthusians of St. Bruno (1085) ; the dual Abbey of Fontevrault in Anjou (1099), for monks and nuns, but ruled by an abbess. Closely similar to the Benedictines were the communities of regular canons living under the rule of Saint Augustine. One of the most famous was the Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris, established in 1113 by the great philosopher, William of Champeaux, and which became one of the best centres of theological activities.

Bernard of Clairvaux.

Their most famous member was Saint Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, a Burgundian (1090-1153). That extraordinary character—an ascetic, a mystic, an orator, a man of affairs—was the dominant figure of his time. We find him writing letters, sermons, treatises, and hymns; healing a schism in the Church; reconciling Frederick of Hohenstaufen with the Emperor; disputing with Abelard; stemming heresy in the south; and preaching the Second Crusade, the failure of which somewhat dimmed his prestige. A strange career, a dramatic contradiction, of whom none was more keenly conscious than himself: whilst the great monk, urged by his devouring zeal and the entreaties of his fellow churchmen, was ever roaming the world he had forsworn, he was ever sighing for the peace and obscurity of his cloister; a man of action if ever there was one, he was at heart a mystic.

§ 3. THE MILITARY ORDERS.

Monasticism was thus assuming many forms and undertaking many tasks. The Benedictines of Saint Maur were already engaged in their great career of erudition; Saint Denys was the official record-keeper of the Capetian monarchy. Even the construction of bridges became the special duty of an order in the Rhône valley. The Crusades saw the rise of associations in which knighthood and monasticism were blended. The Hospitallers (Knights of the Order of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem) were founded, immediately upon the capture of the Holy City (1099), as a nursing brotherhood. Then they turned into an aristocratic community of Christian warriors. They survived as Knights of Rhodes, then, until 1798, as Knights of Malta; and the Order still claims to exist, the faintest shadow, in the twentieth century. The Templars (1123), also of French origin, were from the beginning a militant organization. These orders were veritable states, with their domains, their fortresses, their own discipline, and especially their treasury. We shall see how the Templars came to rival the Jews and the Lombards as the bankers of the Middle Ages, thus drawing upon themselves the persecution of a greedy king. There are no more picturesque figures than those of those fighting monks, in knightly armour under their black or white cloak, on which stood out the great cross of white or red.[1]

§ 4. The Friars.

It is pathetic to see the Regular Church fighting for ever against the curse of her own wealth, and for ever be defeated. It is true that she does not welcome the assistance of the laity in that fight. The monasteries received gifts and legacies on every hand—the " dowry " of their own members, conscience money, bequests *in extremis*. They were on the whole efficiently managed, and as mortmain or inalienable tenure was the rule of the Church, they could not but wax richer. Such wealth excited the envy of nobles and kings, who strove by all means to take hold of it. Once more the Church, regular as well as secular, was in danger of being entangled with, and possibly engulfed by, the feudal class. Yet another effort was made, the most heroic of all, to restore primitive Christianity : the Gospel preached by the poor and to the poor.

The two great orders of Friars or Mendicants, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, were founded about the same time (1209-15). The circumstances of their creation affords another evidence of the central position of France in Western Christendom. Saint Francis of Assisi was an Italian ; but he owes his name to his predilection for the French language.[2] Saint Dominic was a Spaniard, but it was in his ten-year struggle against heresy in Southern France that he conceived the idea of his order. The Friars movement is the greatest attempt at purification and reformation in the history of the Church. It amounted almost to a new birth. The Friars did boldly what Saint Bernard had done by exception and not without remorse : they stepped into the world, preaching charity and repentance. They left behind all material wealth ; they begged for their daily bread. They renounced the peace of the cloister; their life was to be God's battle. In Saint Francis shone forth the Christian ideal in its perfection: humility, charity, chastity. The religion of the West was threatening to become a theological skeleton decked with childish superstitions: the spirit of Saint Francis was life. Through the "third order," or laity affiliated with the Franciscans, it was hoped that the whole of the Christian world would be leavened. Saint Dominic, a great preacher and the champion of orthodoxy, founded an order of preachers, who punningly called themselves the Watch Dogs of the Lord (Domini canes). If in this crusade the Dominicans became associated with the Inquisition, it must be remembered that, in his warfare against heresy, Dominic himself had relied exclusively on spiritual weapons.

---

[1] A third similar order was that of the Teutonic knights, founded in 1197, and afterwards transferred to the Baltic region.

[2] We are told that he would burst into songs in French, of his own composition.

The success of the Friars was stupendous. Within half a century the General of the Franciscans had under his rule 8,000 houses and 200,000 Friars. In 1280 there was a Dominican monastery in Greenland. And with success there followed once more the wealth they had spurned: the Mendicants became capitalists in their turn. Not only did they reach the common people, but they assumed a leading part in education. They secured the right of teaching in the universities—not without desperate resistance on the part of the older communities. Saint Thomas Aquinas was a Franciscan, Saint Bonaventura a Dominican. Whilst the Benedictines had but exceptionally exercised the parish ministry, the Friars invaded that field also. This brought them into a conflict with the secular church, which, little as the outside world hears of it, is going on even in our own days. The Friars had to pay in many ways the ransom of their success: hardly any class in society was as persistently vilified, by priests, monks and laymen, alike, as were those too ardent saviours of the Christian Church.

§ 5. The Papacy.

The development of monasticism went hand in hand with that of the Papacy. The isolated abbeys were at first strictly under the jurisdiction of the bishop in whose diocese they were located. With a great organization of international importance like Cluny, whose abbot was more powerful than any bishop, such submission became difficult to enforce, and, as a matter of fact, the principal orders owed allegiance to Rome only. This was strikingly the case with the Hospitallers and Templars, born of the Crusade, which was under the supreme leadership of the Holy See. The Mendicants went even farther; no Friar felt himself bound to any one particular house; his one permanent chief was not a local bishop, but his General, and, above him, the common Father of the Faithful. Franciscans and Dominicans could be called by anticipation, as the Jesuits were three centuries later, the militia of Rome.

The most brilliant period of the Middle Ages was also the one in which the papal power reached its proudest pinnacle. The schism with the Greek Church had really strengthened the hands of the Pope in the West. The Archbishops or Metropolitans ceased to have any special power in their ecclesiastical province. In the dramatic struggle with the Empire, the popes enjoyed hours of complete triumph, and, on the whole, the dearly purchased victory was theirs. Such popes as Gregory VII (Hildebrand) and Urban II, a French Cluniac, boldly excommunicated the greatest princes in Christendom. At the time of the Crusades the popes appeared as the visible heads of the West: every one who took up the cross became their man. Under Innocent III, papal imperialism reached its zenith: it seemed as though the Holy See would, through its legates, assume the actual management of the temporal realms. The jubilee of 1300 was for Boniface VIII the occasion of a triumph such as no Roman emperor had known.

The Middle Ages are full of vast abortive dreams. The power of the Papacy, so irresistible in appearance at the close of the thirteenth century, was within the same generation made almost illusory by incurable causes of weakness. The Pope was still an Italian prince: he had to count with the Roman aristocracy, the Roman mob, his petty neighbours, the German Emperor, and the Greek. He would at times lean for support upon the Normans of Sicily, and then secretly abet his chief enemy Constantinople, when his protectors waxed too powerful. The Crusaders were a failure, partly because of this shifting policy of Rome: Rome could not make up her mind whether she wanted to conquer Jerusalem by way of Constantinople or Constantinople by way of Jerusalem. The Pope had repeatedly to call upon the Capetians for assistance: a Capetian finally turned the Papacy into a chaplaincy of the French crown. After the humiliation of the "Captivity of Babylon," as the sojourn of the popes in Avignon was called (1305-78), came the crowning scandal of schism. There were two or more rival popes, anathematizing one another, contending for the obedience of Christendom, and incidentally auctioning off the ecclesiastical benefices under their control. Perhaps the greatest miracle of Catholic faith is that it survived such an ordeal.

§ 6. The Gallican Tendency.

No wonder that within the Church itself there arose spiritual powers rivalling the Pope: the great theological school of Paris, and the universal council. This great assembly assumed the right of requesting the rival claimants to abdicate: it seemed as though Catholicism might turn into a parliamentary monarchy. The power in the French Church that gained most from the eclipse of the Papacy was neither the University nor the Council, but the King. The King himself was endowed with a sacred character; he was the Lord's anointed, the successor of Clovis and Charlemagne. The holiness of Louis IX added to the religious prestige of the monarchy. The bishops were with the national sovereign; so were the masses of the people. Philip the Fair could safely appeal to the loyalty of his subjects in his conflict with Rome. In the Great Schism (1378-1417), whilst Europe was divided, France followed almost universally the decision of the King. When the claimants, supported by France, proved intractable, the French court could seriously consider "withholding their obedience" from the Holy See, which would have left the temporal power supreme in things ecclesiastical. The inevitable outcome of this process seemed to be *Gallicanism*: a French Church still in spiritual communion with Rome, but autonomous in all matters of discipline and administration, under the protection of the monarchy. Such, indeed, was the purport of the *Pragmatic Sanction* (1438), which settled the situation of the French Church in accordance with the principles of the Council of Basel. This settlement was not final: the Middle Ages excel all other periods in their incapacity for settling anything definitely. Gallicanism, never officially established as a permanent policy, remained a constant and vigorous tradition in France until the end of the ancient regime. At the time of the Revolution [1] it flared up again, and expired. The last embers were extinguished in the nineteenth century.[2]

The monks and the popes had dominated the mediæval Church. They had more than once rescued her from corruption. But, in the fifteenth century, monks and popes had fallen far short of their mission. The monasteries, at the close of the Hundred Years' War, lay in ruins: mediæval monasticism, like many other things mediæval, received its death-blow during that great storm. We have to wait till the seventeenth century for a decided revival in the number and wealth of the orders. Most of the abbatial buildings that still survive date from that later period. And it was not until the nineteenth century that there was in the Regular Church a spiritual revival recalling the greatness of the age of faith.

The Papacy issued weakened from the great trial of the schism. The popes were still—more than ever perhaps—Italian princes, chiefly interested in the tangled politics of the Peninsula. All spiritual virtue had gone from them. Epicures, diplomatists, and warriors filled the seat of Saint Peter.

In the eleventh century a great reformation had saved the Church through the monks and the popes; in the sixteenth a great reformation was directed against the monks and the popes: God fulfils Himself in many ways.

---

[1] Civil Constitution of the Clergy.

[2] There is still in Paris one small Gallican church.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY

§ 1. Power of the Church.

If the laws of God are indeed revealed to us, they should be the laws of the State; theocracy is the only logical form of government for believers, and theocracy was indeed the ideal of the Middle Ages. We have seen that, partly through her own weaknesses, the Church failed to achieve the absolute supremacy dreamed of by Gregory VII and Innocent III; but she reached, none the less, a degree of wealth and power unrivalled before or since.

Wealth. (*a*) *Land.*

This power was founded partly on her temporal possessions. The bishops had had their share of the spoils in the disruption of the Roman, and later of the Carolingian, Empires. Their episcopal cities had become their possession, sometimes with a clear title, sometimes not without wrangle or compromise with count or vidame. The abbeys, as we have seen, became enormously rich in their constant aspiration towards apostolic poverty. The clergy, secular and regular, were therefore landowners with all the privileges appertaining to that form of property. They had their courts of justice like other lords, and even their troops, which clerics occasionally commanded in person. The main front of the Abbey of Saint Denys, with its picturesque battlements, still recalls the semi-feudal character of the institution. This material power was a source of spiritual weakness. The bishop's piety or the abbot's learning were apt to be overshadowed by more militant traits: for "qui terre a, guerre a"—whoever owns land must fight for it. The rich domains of the Church were a sore temptation for the grasping nobility. The lay *advocates* or *defensors* of the Church,[1] who were appointed only to perform those feudal duties which were incompatible with the priestly character, tended to usurp the domains they were supposed to defend. The rules for the election of abbots were evaded by the practice of *commendation*: a *commendatory* abbot was one who did not possess the canonical qualifications, and was entitled to the mitre and crozier only in effigy, but who claimed the lion's share of the income. Members of the secular clergy, and even laymen of doubtful godliness, could receive such benefices, which as a rule were not conferred by patron, king, or pope without a consideration.

(*b*) *Tithes.*

Another source of wealth were the tithes or taxes levied for the maintenance of the clergy and for purposes of charity. There again abuses arose, which the superstitious respect of the Middle Ages for vested interests—even when they meant ancient injustice—made it difficult to remedy. Tithes became assignable property, and greedy lords, spiritual or temporal, would keep the greater part to themselves, leaving to the actual incumbent a bare pittance, called with unconscious irony his "congruous portion."

Ecclesiastical Courts.

In addition to her normal jurisdiction as landowner, the Church had special courts of a purely ecclesiastical character. These had authority over all clerics in major or minor orders, and over all their retainers (suppôts) in the widest sense.[2] She had jurisdiction also over all men in matters pertaining to ecclesiastical discipline and faith. These could affect the whole life of a Christian. In particular, as the canonical rules regarding marriage were somewhat intricate, it was not impossible for one versed in canon law to detect flaws even in princely unions—or to justify that which at first did not seem permissible. The Church had in the canon law a weapon which she used at times for uncanonical purposes. The difficulties of the Capetians themselves in these matters were frequent and notorious. The most striking instances are those of King Robert the Pious and of Philip Augustus. Robert's marriage with

---

[1] Avoués for the abbeys, vidames for the bishoprics.

[2] E.g. all the tradesmen dealing with the University of Paris.

Queen Bertha was condemned (995) because they were cousins in the third degree, and godparents to the same child. Philip came into conflict with the redoubtable Innocent III, who refused to validate his divorce from Ingeborg of Denmark (1200).

Excommunication and Interdict.

The great method of censure for purely ecclesiastical offences was the excommunication. The culprit was for the time being cut off from the community of the faithful, denied access to the Church, deprived of the sacraments. His sentence was published with the impressive symbolism which has ever been such a strong point in Roman Catholicism. His friends, his very family, would shun the contagion of his curse as of a foul disease. The bishops and the popes, especially during the great centuries of faith, the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth, wielded that weapon with a frequency which, in the end, was bound to dull its effect. When Urban II preached the first Crusade, Philip I of France, William II of England, Henry IV of Germany, were all under sentence of excommunication. The sixth Crusade was led by an excommunicated emperor. The Interdict was a collective measure, affecting either a church, a chapter, a city, a diocese, or even a whole country. It might be called in modern parlance a sacramental strike: the priests ceased to perform their spiritual ministry, leaving the world comfortless, and the individuals in constant fear of dying unshriven. Bishop Hincmar of Rheims thus placed his own diocese under interdict. Both France and England were similarly punished.

The "mansuetude" to which the ecclesiastical authorities lay claim has been disputed. On the whole, it seems evident that the guiding principle of the Church was not revenge, or even intimidation, but the correction of the sinner himself, for his soul's sake. It is not certain that this generous doctrine has fully permeated our criminal codes even yet.

§ 2. INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH.

Charity.

With such authority, and such means of discipline, the Church could and did attempt to temper the wildness of the age. Not only did she offer to the world-weary, the gentle-hearted, the studious, the mystic, the sacred peace of her cloisters, but she did much charitable work of the most admirable kind. Hospitals and lazarets were created everywhere. The poor were fed and clothed in the truest Christian spirit: Cluny atoned for its excessive wealth by the generous distribution of alms. In other respects did the Church anticipate our laws for social welfare. Not only was the Sunday rest strictly enforced, but a large number of holidays were set apart, thus reducing the hours of labour in the course of the year to a total which would satisfy most modern workmen. The Church, more thorough than the modern state, provided both the leisure and the means of employing it. Processions, masses, miracle plays, broke the monotony of the toiler's life, gave him visions of beauty and glimpses of a higher world, which are sadly lacking in many of our industrial centres. Even the grotesque ceremonies which shock us men of little faith served a purpose, and may be interpreted as a sign of motherly indulgence. We shall dwell in a later chapter on the greatest of the Church's services to society, the preservation and spread of learning.

Peace and Truce of God.

Finally, she attacked the worst evil of the time, the fighting spirit which turned the whole of Europe into a constant battlefield. This she attempted in many different ways. First by plain restrictions. The set of regulations known as the Peace of God was meant to protect the clergy and Church property from violence and plunder: but it was extended in very generous fashion so as to cover as many peasants as possible. This was completed by the Truce of God, which enjoined a peaceful Sunday, or rather week-end, and finally limited the " open season " for human game to Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, during certain weeks only. It was not the Church who had the honour of ending the ubiquitous curse of private warfare: it was the King. Like her charities, the Church's efforts on behalf of peace were the merest palliatives. But she did her best and achieved some results, at a time when the King could hardly defend himself against his neighbours.

Knighthood.

The second method was to transform the fighting caste from within, blending the Christian with the military virtues, placing strength and pride at the service of righteousness instead of self-will. This the Church attempted to do by giving her consecration to the institution of knighthood. She did not create knighthood, which was of a purely military origin; but she turned it almost into an eighth sacrament, an ordination. The ceremony of initiation was preceded by a vigil of prayer and a ritual bath; confession and communion were required; the sword or spear received the blessing of the priest. The new knight thus became the soldier of Christ, as Charlemagne had been of old, and Godfrey the conqueror of Jerusalem, and the fighting monks of the Temple and of the Hospital, and Louis the Holy King.

This religious strain grew stronger, and its professed ideal more exalted, as the institution itself degenerated, became more showy, useless, and fantastic. Roland, who in the epic is the true type of the soldier of Christ, was not conscious of all the refinements of symbolism which were later added to the ritual of knighthood. The Quest of the Holy Grail is not a spontaneous expression of faith: it pertains to the romances of chivalry. The semi-conscious romanticism of that later period is a sure token of decadence.

§ 3. The Crusades.

The Crusades give the measure of the Church's influence in the mediæval world. The first—but the first alone—was an explosion of popular faith. No sooner had Pope Urban II spoken the word at Clermont in 1095 than the masses took up the cry: Deus vult! God wills it! They outstripped in their eagerness the barons and even the clergy. A multitudinous rabble, roused by the preaching of Peter the Hermit, and under such leaders as Walter the Penniless, rolled down the Danube valley, ravaging as they went, massacring the Jews, battling against the Hungarians and Bulgars. Warfare, exhaustion, and disease had destroyed the greater part of their wild army before they reached Constantinople, and their broken remnants were annihilated by the Turks in Asia Minor. The official expedition barely escaped a similar fate. There is no more tragic example of the discrepancy between the ideal and its realization in the Middle Ages. Inefficiency, divided counsels, sloth and cruelty, in addition to the intrinsic difficulties of the task, nearly ruined the enterprise. Several hundred thousand men had taken up the badge of the Crusaders: at the end of three years (1099) 40,000 warriors were left to capture the Holy City. Godfrey of Bouillon became the head of a little Latin and feudal state. This kingdom of Jerusalem flickered for nearly a century, thanks to constant reinforcements from the West. Louis VII led 150,000 men into Palestine: he failed to take Damascus, and came back with 300 (1147-49). In 1187 Jerusalem was taken by the Turks: the greatest sovereigns in the West, Barbarossa, Philip Augustus, Richard the Lion-Hearted, hastened to the rescue—and failed. The fourth crusade was directed against the Christian Emperor of Constantinople (1204). The sixth seems almost a travesty: Frederick II, at war with the Pope, secured possession of Jerusalem for a few years, through an amicable arrangement with the Sultan of Egypt. The two crusades of Saint Louis ended in defeat and captivity.[1]

The Crusades belong to European, and not exclusively to French history: yet the proud boast "Gesta Dei per Francos" is not wholly unjustified. For it was in France that a French pope first preached the Holy War; it was another Frenchman, Saint Bernard, who urged the second crusade. The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was veritably a French colony, governed by French laws.[2] The Knights of Saint John and the Templars were founded by Frenchmen. It was at the time and under the influence of the Crusades that the French language became the most widely diffused in Christendom.[3]

---

[1] A curious episode is the Children's Crusade. Under the leadership of a young shepherd, Stephen of Cloyes, some thirty thousand children, not over twelve or thirteen years of age, assembled with the intention of reconquering the Holy Land (1212). Philip Augustus managed to send not a few back to their parents. Others embarked at Marseilles: two ship owners had offered them free transportation "for the glory of God." When they had them safely on board they took them to Egypt and calmly sold them into slavery: a brilliant coup, which shows that we are apt to under-estimate the business ability of the Middle Ages. The young crusaders were kindly treated by the Khalif, who had been a student in the University of Paris. Cf. A. Luchaire, *Philip-Augustus.*

[2] The Assizes of Jerusalem.

[3] The Latins or Westerners were known as Franks for centuries in the East. Some of the claims of France to a sphere of influence in Syria are based on the traditions of the Crusades.

Results of the Crusades.

There still floats a unique glamour about the Crusades. Yet they must be pronounced a failure in every respect. The magnitude of the movement was a tribute to the power of the Church—but its final impotence endangered her prestige. The Crusades and knighthood are closely knit together: the Crusades are the great collective quest or adventure; the life of a knight should be a crusade wherever he happens to be. But, in both, the combination of Christian meekness and warlike pride was bound to be unstable. The more primitive passion soon reasserted itself, and the Church was unable to check the selfishness and violence of these warriors of Christ. Lives and hearts were not transformed by the cross sewn on the cloak. Not only did the Crusaders freely indulge in all the ferocity of Western warfare, but they were soon tainted with Eastern corruption of faith and morals—for which the Templars remained a byword. According to modern historians, the Crusades had but one good effect from the moral point of view: they eliminated from Europe a large, turbulent, undesirable element. This view will not be accepted without demur by those who still cherish the conventional picture of the Crusader.

The cultural benefits of the Crusades were due, not to the military expedition as such, and still less to their religious purpose, but to intercourse with the East and contact with the Arabic civilization. Now this contact was taking place more intimately in Sicily and in Spain than in Palestine and in Egypt. And this intercourse would have been closer still, and more profitable, if it had not been a mere by-product of fighting. That peaceful relations between men of different faiths were not unthinkable is proved by the examples of many merchants, and even barons, who traded with the infidels. Frederick II and Saint Louis both made agreements with the Mohammedans. The claim that the Crusades were a "defensive offensive," which saved Europe from the blight of the Crescent, is not substantiated. The Westerners did their best to undermine the one bulwark of Christianity in the East, the Greek Empire. When the era of the Crusades opened, Islam had reached Nicea. When the Middle Ages closed, the Turks were on the Danube.

§ 4. Anticlericalism.

Faith was absolute in the Middle Ages; the Church was rich and powerful; to the clergy were entrusted, in addition to their spiritual duties, many important missions. Yet, if chronicles and literature are to be trusted, anticlericalism, often of a virulent kind, was rife. Their sacred character failed to protect priests, monks, and even the Pope, against the violence of the nobles, the common people, or the King. We find many instances of strife between baron and abbot or bishop—excommunication being met at the sword's point. The Church, as we shall see, was hostile to the communal movement: hence, in episcopal cities, many a bloody riot. The people of Laon murdered their spiritual and temporal lord, Bishop Gaudri. The indignities offered by the envoys of Philip the Fair, Nogaret and Sciarra Colonna, to Pope Boniface VIII are well remembered.

These facts, numerous and dramatic though they be, are but episodes: more convincing is the tone of literature. There runs through it an undeniable current of hostility against the priests. In the epic, which mirrors the feelings of the nobility, rarely is any worthy rôle given to a cleric. Turpin, the knightly bishop, Roland's friend and peer, is an exception: as a rule, the men in holy orders are accused of greed and cowardice, and the barons express their contempt with the most brutal frankness. Even worse is the picture that we find in the popular tales or fabliaux: avarice, hypocrisy, and sexual immorality are constantly ascribed to the clergy, regular as well as secular. Finally, certain clerics have left us very unflattering portraits of their fellows: Guiot of Provins, for one, agrees with the author of the fabliaux. The national clergy were almost unanimous in their denunciation of Rome—the corruption of the Curia, the arrogance of the legates.

In the face of such evidence, it seems idle to deny that some of these strictures were deserved. The Church recognized the fact, in the most courageous manner, by constantly attempting to reform herself. We have seen how ecclesiastical wealth tempted many unworthy men either to take orders or to seek control of church property. If the noblest souls flocked to the cloisters, there also were found the weak and the slothful. Not all monks were urged by a true and lasting vocation: some had taken their vows on the spur of some great despair or repentance, and the old Adam soon woke up again under the cowl ; others had been imprisoned against their will by enemies, or even by unscrupulous relatives, who wanted their worldly goods. No wonder that the lives of those men were far from edifying.

Still, individual frailties would hardly have explained the consistent anticlericalism of mediæval literature, so oddly combined with profound faith. It is the result of the inner contradiction we meet at every turn in the Middle Ages : the discrepancy between the exalted ideal, perhaps alien to the race, and the still barbaric habits of life, the still crude methods of thought. The clergy were not merely guides : they were tamers ; lashed with spiritual whips, the world would obey, but growl. The perfection of the Christian life is so unattainable that the blindest could see the abyss between preaching and practice : the priests could not complain if they were judged harshly according to the standards they themselves had set. History obeys the law of humour : an unnatural strain brings about a reaction ; theocracy needs to be corrected by the fear of priestcraft. And then the people were more outspoken than our contemporaries, because, strongly entrenched in their faith, they had no fear of lending weapons to doubters. They could separate better than we do the cleric as a creature of flesh from the priest as one endowed with sacramental powers. Be this as it may, it is curious to note that the anticlerical politicians of the Third Republic had at the back of them a tradition as old as the Gothic cathedrals.

CHAPTER V

CHRISTIAN CULTURE: ART

The renaissance of government, art, and learning under Charlemagne had proved short-lived as well as feeble: the ninth century was hardly less barbaric than the seventh. At the close of the tenth, however, a new tremor of life was perceptible in the West. It was the beginning of a culture singularly original and complex, which reached its perfection in the thirteenth century. This culture was essentially Christian; its origin is to be found in the monasteries; and its greatest achievement is ecclesiastical art.

§ 1. ROMANESQUE ARCHITECTURE.

The style prevailing in France at the close of the Dark Ages is known as Romanesque, just as the dialects spoken in that territory are called Romance. *Romanesque* and *Romance* are both *Roman*, debased through the ignorance of the Barbarians. Thick walls pierced with small rounded windows; heavy columns—whenever possible monoliths borrowed from ancient buildings; crude capitals which still bore the traces of classical influences; and timber roofs requiring but little technical skill: such were the principal features of the late Carolingian churches. Northern, Byzantine, and even Saracenic elements are found in their construction. The large blank spaces on the walls were covered with frescoes. The carving was crude, stiff, unnatural, hieratic, yet not lifeless; its effect was enhanced by vivid polychromy. Odd corners were filled with a strange fauna of monsters, which seemed like petrified nightmares. Inside, the effect was sombre and barbaric; outside, with its pyramidical shape and its squat tower, the church seemed heavily chained to the ground.

The timber roofs were frequently burned down in the course of the Norman invasions. With the comparative peace which followed the cessation of these forays, with the revival of piety which marked the beginning of the eleventh century, there was an immense outburst of building activity. We have already quoted the famous phrase of the Burgundian Benedictine Raoul Glaber: "The world was shaking off the rags of its antiquity, and covering itself anew with a white cloak of churches."

The great problem was to cover the nave with a stone vault, instead of the perishable timber. Many different methods were essayed, and not a few mishaps occurred: of Raoul Glaber's churches hardly any are in existence to-day. Some of the finest Romanesque buildings, like the great abbeys of Caen, did not receive their final roofing until the close of the period. But success was achieved at last, and in the process a new art was created. Although they are still using the round arch, the churches of the eleventh century are structurally akin to the Gothic cathedrals rather than to the Carolingian basilicas.

This Romanesque art was characteristically monastic and regional. Almost all the great churches that remain from that period are Benedictine abbeys.[1] Of the most magnificent of them all, Cluny, the iconoclasts of the Revolution and the profiteers of the First Empire have left practically nothing. Although Cluny's supremacy tended to create a standard type, each province offered very distinct features, due to differences in the building materials and in local traditions. The south (Saint Trophime, Arles) had not yet forgotten Rome. In Périgord we find Saint Front, with its five domes reminiscent of Saint Mark's in Venice and of Constantinople. Saint Sernin (Toulouse) is built of bricks, whilst at Le Puy and Vézelay a striking, almost Saracenic effect is obtained by alternating courses of light and dark stones. In Auvergne are also found the massive pyramidical towers which Richardson has so skilfully copied in his Trinity Church, Boston. The softer stone of Poitou encouraged richer carving. There is great variety in the number, disposition, and proportions of the steeples: as the architects grew bolder, their octagonal spires would soar more triumphantly. On the whole, it was an art singularly rich, robust, and sincere.

[1] St. Germain in Paris; St. Stephen, Caen; St. Trophime, Arles; St. Bénigne, Dijon; St. Sernin, Toulouse; Ste. Croix, Bordeaux.

§ 2. GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE: ITS PRINCIPLE.

The great achievement of the late Romanesque builders was the method whereby the weight of the stone roof was distributed over a number of separate pillars, instead of resting upon the whole length of the wall. This was done by covering each bay with two intersecting barrel vaults, and reinforcing by ribs those intersections. The meeting of the diagonal ribs created a broken, or pointed, arch, the ogive: this new form became the keynote of the style, and was gradually applied to all arches and windows.

The oblique thrust on the pillars, instead of being absorbed by sheer mass, was met by buttresses; and, as the direction and importance of the stress were more accurately determined, the buttresses in their turn became lighter, more graceful: a scaffolding of stone, which might have been awkward, was turned into a unique element of beauty as well as strength. The church was no longer a mere bulk of masonry: it had been reduced to its essential elements; it had become an organic structure, the embodiment of thought, daring, and experience. The pillars could now rise to tremendous heights; the walls were little more than a screen; they could be practically dispensed with, and the space filled with stained glass windows. It is this technical revolution, rather than the use of the pointed arch, which is the essence of Gothic. The boldness of the system, when we consider the crude technical means at hand, and the soft texture of the material used, is stupendous. It not seldom courted failure—has not twentieth-century engineering met its Quebec Bridge? The chancel of Beauvais, finished in 1272, collapsed. It was rebuilt; but the church, one of the most ambitious in Christendom, was never completed, and is still patched up with a formidable blank wall. The hazardous success of certain architects was ascribed at the time to supernatural assistance—the Devil, for once, being given more than his due. But on the whole, built of common stone which slowly crumbles away under the perpetual rain of Northern France, neglected for centuries, repaired by botching architects,[1] the Gothic cathedrals are standing to-day in all their majesty. Hundreds of shells burst upon Notre-Dame of Rheims: the most aerial of the great French churches, seemingly frail and constantly ailing, stood the bombardment better than many modern citadels.

---

[1] It was found necessary to pull down the beautiful steeple of St. Denys, as the result of a bungling modern restoration.

§ 3. Evolution and Inspiration of Gothic Architecture.

Romanesque art developed, through several centuries, in many independent places: this is natural enough, since Romanesque was evolved, slowly and locally, out of the widely diffused Roman tradition. The origin of Gothic, on the contrary, can be clearly determined in space and time. The term "Gothic," applied by the Italians, with some contempt, to all Pre-Renaissance work, is meaningless. The Goths, absorbed without leaving a trace, had nothing to do with it. At the time the style was called the "new art" and "French work"—opus francigenum. For it was evolved in the royal domain of the Capetians—"France" in the narrower sense. There it achieved its greatest triumphs, and thence it spread to the rest of France and of Europe.

The first great church in which the new style was predominantly used was the Abbey of Saint Denys, rebuilt under Suger, and dedicated in 1143. Then came Noyon, Senlis, Sens, Saint Remy at Rheims, the apse of Saint-Germain-des-Près in Paris. Of all these excellent models of early Gothic, perhaps Noyon is to be preferred, for its completeness and its austerity blended with grace. In 1163 Notre-Dame of Paris was begun. Although Paris was not yet an archbishopric, its political influence was such that the King's Cathedral became a national pattern. No Gothic church, and very few classical buildings, offer a main elevation of more serene majesty than Notre-Dame, with its simple composition, its bold horizontal lines giving repose to the whole, the complete subordination of ornaments to the general effect, the massive towers creating an impression of strength—quiet, but not inert, as of a pensive giant. About the same time rose the cathedral of Laon, with its bold recesses, its ruggedness, its many towers so picturesquely crowning the abrupt oppidum.[1] Then also was built Chartres, the cathedral in which the decoration has been most respected, making it an incomparable treasure-house of mediæval art—Chartres, with its two unequal spires seen from afar in the vast plain of Beauce.

---

[1] The builders had the touching inspiration of giving a place of honour in the decoration of the cathedral to the oxen which had so patiently brought the stones up that terrible hill.

Early in the thirteenth century Gothic art became lighter, more ornate, whilst retaining its sober dignity. For the primitive lancets were substituted the traceried windows. It is the period of Rheims and Amiens, two of the most priceless heirlooms of France and of the world—both of them barely escaping destruction at the hands of the Barbarians. Many others of hardly lesser fame were undertaken in those fruitful years. In 1244 Pierre of Montereau began for King Saint Louis the gem of the period, the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, a shrine of glorious light set in fretted stone. From France proper this French art radiated all over Europe. The south was more refractory to its influence. Saint Cecile, at Albi, a plain mass of rosy bricks, like a crouching sphinx, has little in common with Amiens and Rouen. However, Burgos, much further south, has a purely French cathedral; so have Metz and Strasbourg in the east. "No English work," says an English scholar, "led up to Westminster Abbey, and no German work to the cathedral of Cologne"; the source of that wonderful art is purely Capetian.

The Romanesque churches were mostly of monastic inspiration. Many of them arose in desert places, or on the outskirts of the cities. The Gothic cathedrals, on the contrary, are an urban product. They need for their setting the narrow streets and the serrated gables of the mediæval town.[1] The great moment in the building of these monuments is just the time of communal movement. Victor Hugo and Viollet-le-Duc went so far as to say that the spirit of the cathedral was popular, democratic, and even, like the commune itself, anticlerical at times. This is an exaggeration. At the origin of each of the Gothic cathedrals we find, not a spontaneous, anonymous impulse, but the effort of the clergy, and particularly of the bishop. The main decoration of the building, with its consistent, elaborate, and learned symbolism, was beyond the power of creation of the people, and sometimes beyond their comprehension: Chartres, for instance, is an encyclopædia of stone and glass which the masses could not have written, and were not always able to read aright.[1] The few grotesque and at times obscene carvings mentioned by Victor Hugo, which are indeed anticlerical satires, do not invalidate the general rule. But there is at least this much truth in Hugo's paradox: the cathedral was not the work of the clergy alone. There was a hearty, a universal co-operation, a "sacred union" of all classes in the common work, which is probably the secret of the greatness of the art.

---

[1] Rouen, for instance, still offers a good background for its cathedral; Notre-Dame in Paris loses heavily by its isolation, and the shocking administrative banalité of the buildings which face the Parvis.

This enthusiasm lasted for nearly a century, and waned. Few of the sacred buildings that were not completed when Saint Louis died were ever finished. As a matter of fact, not a single Gothic cathedral stands to-day with the seven spires which were provided in the standard plan. In the fourteenth century the inspiration was gone. Yet admirable work was still performed, such as the strong, simple, truly classical nave of Saint Ouen at Rouen. In the fifteenth, Gothic, mirroring the complex, tormented life of the day, became fond of elaborate tracery, with capricious, reversed curves, dancing as it were like flames in the wind.[2] The vaulting became particularly intricate—a web of chiselled stone, almost detached from the roof, with heavy pendants like stalactites. These miracles of technique meant that the old sincerity was dead. They remind us of the gorgeous trappings with which dying chivalry was decking itself at the time, or of the acrobatic feats of the last mediæval rhymesters. Yet that exquisite and artificial style has left us many delightful pieces: Saint Maclou and parts of the cathedral at Rouen, the portals of Toul and Tours, the church of Brou. The Gothic principle survived in church construction through a great part of the sixteenth century: Saint Eustache, in Paris, is a Gothic building clothed with classical ornaments. Then the great national art fell into complete disrepute, and mediocre pastiches of Saint Peter's ruled the day.

---

[1] M. Emile Mâle, in his fascinating book, *L'Art Religieux au XIIIème Siècle*, gives three curious examples of such misreadings. St. Denys was figured carrying his head in his hands; this was simply a symbol of the manner of his death. But the people, interpreting literally what was meant as a sign, created the famous legend that St. Denys had picked up his head and walked away with it. Slaying the dragon was a well-established symbol for victory over heresy: the people made up stories of real dragons, killed by a Christian Perseus like St. George. The legend of St. Nicholas resuscitating three little children whom a wicked butcher had killed and stored away in a salt barrel may be a misreading of a more historical episode—the saint delivering three officers unjustly accused.

[2] There is a curious kinship between Flamboyant and eighteenth-century Rococo, as well as between them and some forms of Art Nouveau.

§ 4. A Symphony of all the Arts.

A Gothic cathedral is not merely a wonder of architecture : it is an epitome of all the arts, an encyclopædia of all the learning of the time. Of such a symphony of culture could be said what Baudelaire says of Nature :

> La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
> Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles ;
> L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles
> Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.
>
> Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent
> Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,
> Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,
> Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.

Gothic sculpture generally evokes the idea of angular, emaciated bodies, ascetic and primitive, or else of gargoyles, demons, chimeras, spirited and grotesque, snarling at the passer-by. These by no means exhaust the possibilities of mediæval sculpture. At its point of perfection, at Rheims or Amiens, the early spiritual beauty still shines forth ; the slight stiffness of the draperies, the elongation of the figures, the conventionality of the attitudes, are really not faults at all, but essential conditions of statuary applied to architecture. The statues have a life of their own, but they are vitally connected with the whole edifice. The faces have unsurpassed serenity and classical beauty : there is nothing in Greek tradition that offers so much gentleness and power as the " Beau Dieu," or Christ giving His blessing, at Amiens. Nor were the mediæval artists incapable of harmonious composition : the Last Judgment on so many portals, the coronation of the Virgin Mary at Rheims, are admirably massed and balanced. Of extraordinary interest are the capitals, all different, adorned with humble local foliation instead of the stately and classical acanth. Oak leaves, parsley, ivy and vine, chicory and thistle are treated with loving realism, yet with the surest instinct for decorative effect. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries art became more human, more pathetic. The Virgins are delightful young mothers, playing with their Babe. The

Crucifixion, the Pietà, the Sepulchre, are treated dramatically, with a consciousness of effect which the Church may have borrowed from the stage : for the time was the heyday of the miracles and mysteries.

All other arts were pressed into service for the glory of God : the elaborate vestments, the rare frankincense, the thousand tapers, the ornaments of gold enriched with jewellery and enamel, the magnificent stained-glass windows, the grave Gregorian chant, and the pealing of the mighty organ, completed a spiritual and sensuous symphony such as the world had never known. The most complete, the best beloved of our cathedrals are bare and lifeless now. Time has effaced the polychromy of the statues, faded the vault of azure studded with golden stars ; the Hundred Years' War, the Religious Wars, the Revolution, the long period of materialism and poor taste in the nineteenth century, have played havoc with those wonders ; the cheapest products of commercialized " art," the *bondieuseries* of the Saint Sulpice Quarter, are sacrilegiously exhibited under the Gothic arches. Yet, who does not feel even now that human hands have never built a more prodigious gateway to the home of the soul ?

CHAPTER VI

CHRISTIAN CULTURE: LITERATURE

§ 1. MEDIÆVAL LATIN.

IN literature also was the influence of the Church powerful and, for many generations, supreme. First of all, there was an abundant production of works written by clerks in the clerks' language, Latin.[1] Latin was then the sole medium for all learned efforts, and even for some in lighter vein: the monks, carried away by their admiration for classical letters, indited without scruples poems of a decidedly profane character.

Mediæval Latin literature is awkwardly situated. From the glory that was Rome it is cut off by the abyss of the Dark Ages; out of touch with much of contemporary life, it is almost a challenge to the incipient sense of nationality. It stands for a lost cause: the unity of the Christian West. For these reasons students are apt to pass it by, as dead, body and soul, language and inspiration; whilst they devote their loving attention to the most worthless fragment in the vernacular. Such neglect is profoundly unjust. Even from the point of view of mere form, mediæval Latin is not despicable. The efforts which were encouraged by Charlemagne, and carried on by the monastic and episcopal schools, had slowly borne their fruit: the Church had learned Latin anew. The days were gone when a prominent bishop like Gregory of Tours could not write a sentence of its chronicles without barbaric mistakes. By the eleventh century Church Latin was not merely correct: it could display no small degree of dignity and elegance. And it could rise to higher merit than the skilful piecing together of classical phrases: it is not seldom throbbing with life. The mystic yearnings and fears, all the spiritual passions that Christianity had deepened, if not created, and that the new, semi-barbaric world could feel with more intensity than the Epigoni of Roman culture, could be expressed in Church Latin with singular freshness and force.[1] It evolved a versification based on rhyme and accent, instead of the classical metre: a system which may have had its origin in the rude jingles of the Roman soldiers, but which proved equal to the highest demands of lyrical poetry. The enthusiasm of Baudelaire, J. K. Huysmans, and Remi de Gourmont for Church Latin is not the best possible recommendation, as these sophisticated epicures were known to relish a high taste in their literary viands. But congregations of unimpeachable Philistinism are still singing the hymns of Saint Bernard.

---

[1] Latin was sometimes referred to as "clerquois."

Latin prose also regained much of the ground lost during the Dark Ages. The lives of the saints, the biographies of bishops and abbots, the chronicles of monasteries and chapters, incredibly mean and dry under the Carolingians, and even at the beginning of the Middle Ages proper, became, in the twelfth century, more vivid and more human. The Norman Orderic Vital, for instance, or Abbot Suger, give us an interesting picture of the world they lived in. Guibert of Nogent told us his own life with those welcome personal touches that had been so rare for centuries; he related, with the most pronounced antidemocratic bias, the tragic story of the Commune of Laon, and, at second hand, that of the First Crusade. The letters of Saint Bernard, and, in spite of quaint lapses into scholastic pedantry, those of Heloïse, are instinct with passion, mystic or human. Even the didactic treatises, the edifying and pseudo-scientific works, the bulky Bible commentaries, are not to be despised. The famous Speculum Majus, by Vincent of Beauvais, who lived under Saint Louis, may seem to us a very distorting mirror indeed: yet its dry pages were translated into masterpieces of stone and stained glass: without such a guide as Vincent it is well-nigh hopeless to seek the meaning of many windows or portals. It is significant that two of the keenest students of mediæval thought among our contemporaries, Messrs. Henry Osborn Taylor[2] and Emile Mâle,[1] should give among their authorities an overwhelming place to the Latin writers. If we neglect these, our whole picture of the period will be out of focus. This divorce between learned and popular culture has often been called a disaster. Perhaps, however, our own democratic times are not so far ahead of the Middle Ages in this respect as we might think. Not only is there at present a large amount of technical literature which is absolutely beyond the ken of the "vulgar profane," and even of the educated general public, but the fame of even such poets as Vigny and Baudelaire, in their own lifetime, was hardly less esoteric than that of mediæval Latin writers; whilst Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer had no better opportunities than Thomas Aquinas, and never enjoyed the privilege of seeing their syntheses translated into symbolical art for the edification of the masses, like Vincent's Speculum. All that we may say with certainty is that the language difference made the distinction between the élite and the uninitiated more obvious in the thirteenth century than it is in the twentieth.[2]

---

[1] Cf. *Anticlaudianus*, an allegorical poem in hexameters, by Alanus de Insulis (Alan of Lille), twelfth century; hymns, sequences, by Fulbert, Marbode, Abelard, St. Bernard, Adam of St. Victor.

[2] *The Mediæval Mind.*

§ 2. Sermons in Latin and in French.

Most of the sermons of the Middle Ages have reached us in Latin form. It seems probable that many of them were actually delivered in Latin, not only before an audience of clerks, but before the unlettered laity. Adam the Premonstrant complained that people would scorn a sermon in the vulgar tongue, although they could not understand a word of Latin. They may have found spiritual comfort in the mere sonorousness of the Church language, even as millions of Catholics are still doing to-day. It is true that, as early as 813, bishops were directed to have homilies translated into the "rustic Romance language": but these homilies may never have gone beyond the most rudimentary stage of instruction in the essential tenets of the faith. In the latter part of the Middle Ages, however, formal preaching in the vernacular had become well established.

---

[1] *L'Art Religieux en France au XIIIème Siècle* and *L'Art Religieux en France à la fin du Moyen Age.*

[2] Much of the contempt traditionally professed for mediæval Latin is due to the later developments of scholasticism. For the subtle discussion of logic and theology a technical vocabulary was evolved; and as few of us can afford to master this crabbed language—the key to a bare closet full of cobwebs—we dismiss it as barbaric. Once more, scholasticism does not sum up the whole activity of the Middle Ages. It seems also that the eleventh and twelfth centuries wrote better Latin than the subsequent period. If this impression be correct, the deterioration of Latin may be ascribed in part to the blighting influence of scholastic formalism, in part to the growing competition of the vernacular. When scholars discovered that they could express themselves in the common tongue, Latin was to a certain extent devitalized.

Whether in Latin, French, or macaronic compound[1] mediæval sermons are disappointing. We have heard of vast crowds swayed by the eloquence of an Urban II, of a Foulques, of an Abelard, of a Saint Bernard: little or nothing of their magnetism has passed into their reported words. This is emphatically true of the theologians, like Abelard and Thomas Aquinas. Even Saint Bernard the mystic, whose faith performed miracles, whose words must have been spiritual flames, suffered from the common curse of over-subtle and frigid allegory. Good Maurice of Sully, the bishop who rebuilt the cathedral of Paris, preached with more simplicity and directness. Two centuries later we find another notable example of gentleness and sanity, not seriously spoiled by the prevailing pedantry—Jean Gerson, the Chancellor of the University of Paris.

Preaching—we might almost say Christianity itself—was renovated by the Friars. Both Dominicans and Franciscans could be profound theologians: they were above all apostles to the people. Compared with the learned disquisitions of schoolmen, their sermons have the faults we generally ascribe to the popular evangelists of our own days. They were lacking in dignity and taste; their grotesque allegories seemed at times a parody on the fine-drawn symbolism of the more cultured preachers; they were melodramatic in their pathos, and their familiarity verged upon buffoonery. But vigour, sincerity and picturesqueness were theirs; they made Christianity once more vivid, passionate, human. Once in a while we find in them a feeling for the suffering of the poor, which, however crudely worded, is of perennial appeal: "Nowadays," says Friar Menot, "our judges wear long gowns, and their wives are dressed like princesses. Wring their garments: you will find them dripping with the blood of the poor. . . . Do you know whither ascend the cries of the widows and orphans? They mount up to God, calling vengeance upon those who have despoiled them. Above all of you (earthly judges), there is the great Sovereign Judge." The most famous of these popular preachers was Olivier Maillard (*d.* 1502): all the familiar tricks of the modern revivalist, personal attacks, coarse humour, violent vituperation, stagy mannerisms, and an appalling familiarity with the Devil, were already found in him. Of small value as literature, mediæval sermons are a wonderful treasure-house of information about the life and belief of the time.

---

[1] A capricious and farcical mixture of Latin and French; as a rule, no comic effect was sought thereby. The author has heard in bilingual districts of Belgium and Alsace examples of such "macaronic" gibberish, the people remaining apparently unconscious of the amusing medley.

§ 3. LIVES OF SAINTS.

The very first literary texts that we have in Romance are fragments of lives of saints: the Cantilène or Song of Saint Eulalia (end of ninth century), and the life of Saint Léger (tenth). Such poems were hardly separated from the liturgy; they were an extension of the service in honour of the saint, and were recited, or more probably sung, in the Church itself.

Saint Alexis.

The most important of these early lives is that of Saint Alexis, in Northern French or Langue d'Oil (*c.* 1050). Alexis was the scion of a noble Roman house. On his wedding-day—his father had *bought* for him the daughter of a Frankish lord—he ran away from his young bride: "For thy husband hold Jesus alone, who redeemed us with His blood," he said to her in parting. "In this world there is no perfect love; life is fragile, and honours are fleeting; and all joy turns to sadness." He flees as far as Laodicea, thence to Edessa; he gives to the poor whatever gold he still possessed, and gladly takes his place among them. A tempest casts him on the shore of Italy; he seeks refuge in Rome, in the very house of his father, who, still mourning, fails to recognize him. For seventeen years he lives, a holy mendicant, under the stairs of his father's palace. Many times he is a witness of the grief of parents and wife; but he remains unmoved. He feeds on the crumbs from his father's table; he is derided and abused by his father's slaves: still he rejoices in his self-imposed humiliation. Only after his death, through a written confession and a voice from Heaven, are his identity and his saintliness made manifest. His miraculous virtues save the souls of those whom he had abandoned in an earthly sense, but whom he had never ceased to cherish. In spite of the author's simplicity of faith, such a story may shock us as morbidly romantic. When Corneille, with much greater discretion, treated a fundamentally similar theme, *Polyeucte*, his reasonable and refined contemporaries frowned, and Voltaire, a century later, failed to understand. Yet the sacrifice of Saint Alexis would not seen unnatural to us, if we had preserved the essential Christian conception of the world as a vale of affliction and trial.

The lives of the saints were frequently borrowed from contemporary history. Garnier of Pont-Sainte-Maxence wrote, in vigorous style, a poem on the martyrdom of Thomas Becket. Saint Dominic and Saint Francis were the subjects of similar works, and there is a hagiographic element in the delightful reminiscences of Saint Louis' companion, Joinville. But, in the Middle Ages, the frontiers between truth and friction were more shadowy than in our own days. The Golden Legend of the Oriental and of the Celtic worlds offered a magnificent field for credulity and fantasy. The Celtic stories are remarkable for their dreamy and adventurous mysticism; their heroes are pilgrims, who, sailing the strange Western seas, catch a glimpse of Paradise, like Saint Brendan; or, like Saint Patrick and Tungdal, had, long before Dante, visions of Purgatory and Hell. The Oriental cycle is characterized by another form of otherworldliness: the fakir-like asceticism of which Alexis is a good model. In such a tale as *Barlaam and Joasaph* Christianity joins hands with Buddhism. Joasaph was the son of a king of India, whom his father had kept in confinement, for fear that he should ever become a Christian. One day the prince escapes; he comes across first a beggar, then a leper, then a tottering old man. Poverty, sickness, and death are thus revealed to him; he hates and renounces the world, and seeks refuge in asceticism.

Many are the collections of miraculous stories in which sober fact, romancing, and edification are hopelessly ravelled. Whoever has sought to gauge the will-to-believe which animated, not only the masses, but the "intellectuals" during the Great War, will not wonder overmuch at the uncritical attitude of the Middle Ages. Among these collections the most successful was that of Gautier of Coinci (*c.* 1177-

1236), a Benedictine monk. Gautier tagged on to his stories moralizing digressions, which he called *tails*, and which, he charitably warned us, we might skip if so minded. He is a voluble raconteur, and not too squeamish about either the incidents or the style of his legends.

Miracles of Notre Dame.

The Virgin Mary is the heroine of many of these stories. Of her miracles we have both narrative and dramatic versions. Thus the "Miracle of Theophilus," a great favourite in the Middle Ages, which Rutebeuf put on the stage. Theophilus was an ambitious priest of Cilicia, who had made a compact with the Devil—pledging the usual price, his soul. The Virgin saved him, and returned his bond to him. Disconcerting at times are these miracles. The heroes or heroines, through some atrocious crime, get themselves into inextricable difficulties: but the Dea ex machina saves them at the last moment, on account of some peculiar devotion they may have professed for her, or of a supreme cry of appeal. Thus the brigand who never started on an expedition without a prayer to the Virgin: he was finally caught and hanged; but the hands of his heavenly protectress supported him for three days on the gallows, and the people finally pardoned and released the pious knave. Thus the nun who fled her convent, and led a life of wild adventure, but never forgot her Mother Mary. When she returned, after many years, she found that her absence had remained unnoticed: the Virgin herself had filled her place.[1] The quaintest and most touching of these tales is perhaps the "Tumbler" or Clown of Our Lady. A clown was converted, and admitted to the Abbey of Clairvaux. But, alas! in his wandering life he had mastered no clerical art: he did not even know his prayers; and whilst all his brethren were rendering honour to God and the Virgin in seemly fashion, he alone was "grazing like an ox and wasting food without return." With tears he confessed his shame to Our Lady; then it occurred to him to show his devotion in the only way he knew: he performed for her the best tricks of his old trade—he jumped, tumbled, turned somersault, walked on his hands, weeping between whiles, confessing his unworthiness, and praying her ardently to accept his humble homage. And, when he fell down exhausted, the monks who had been spying upon him saw the Queen of Heaven bend over the poor clown, and "with a fair white towel" tenderly wipe his brow.

---

[1] Cf. Maeterlinck's Sister Beatrice.

§ 4. The Drama.

Another branch of literature is of purely ecclesiastical origin: the drama. The Mass itself, with its ritual gestures and its responses, is a commemorative and symbolical tragedy. In the eleventh century, dialogues, at first in Latin, later in the vernacular, were added to the Christmas and Easter services: the two essential Gospel narratives were thus made more vivid to the multitude. In the twelfth century we find such fragments as "The Mystery of Adam," "The Wise Men," "The Foolish Virgins," "Daniel." The sacred play was acquiring a separate life, although it still was connected with the ritual.

Miracles.

The thirteenth century left us legends of the saints in dramatic form: the play of Saint Nicholas, by Bodel, the Miracle of Theophilus, by Rutebeuf. The fourteenth century saw the extraordinary favour of the Miracles of Our Lady. We have a collection of forty such plays, in a single manuscript, together with various poems: this probably represents the repertory of a *Puy*, or religious and literary society in honour of the Virgin. Such associations were numerous at the time.

As the religious drama was growing, it had to leave the altar for the portal, and the portal for a specially erected stage in the public square. But its relations with the Church were not severed: priests for a long time continued to assume parts; mass was said at the beginning of the performance.

Mysteries.

In the fifteenth century the principal type of religious drama was no longer the miracle, which set forth an episode in the life of a saint, but the mystery, based directly upon the Bible, and particularly upon the New

Testament.[1] This development was unfortunate. The "Miracle," definite in scope, varied in setting, and not bound too narrowly by the cords of orthodox tradition, might conceivably have developed into a national tragedy, as it did in Spain. The mystery was not capable of such an evolution. But the favour it enjoyed in the fifteenth century was incredible. The mysteries, although still under Church control, became great civic functions. They were entrusted to special associations or brotherhoods, like the Passion players of Saint Maur, near Paris. The age, in spite of the miseries of war, was fond of pompous display: the sacred dramas were performed even in beleaguered cities. Indeed, they were considered as "pious works" rather than as a recreation, and might help to avert an impending catastrophe. There was first a parade of the actors, in their hundreds, through the streets of the town. Then they reached the elaborate stage on the cathedral square. This was a veritable microcosm, setting forth Heaven above, Hell all agape and belching flames, and the Earth in between. The earth was divided into many scenes or "mansions"—Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Egypt, the Golgotha—and the artists would move with the action from one part of the stage to another. Crude ingenuity was shown in the use of machines: angels were seen floating in mid-air, with means of support invisible to the eyes of faith. Such was the conscientious realism of the setting that the actor impersonating Christ had to suffer great hardship during the protracted Crucifixion scene, and that Judas was in personal danger at the hands of an uncritical populace. The plays were tremendous in duration as well as in scenery and personnel. The Passion of Arnoul Greban (*c.* 1450) contained no less than 35,000 lines, that is to say the equivalent of ten to fifteen modern tragedies. Jean Michel, a few years later, recast parts of Greban's work, and expanded it to 50,000 lines.

The Church, as we have seen, had long recognized the need of relief, even in her own ceremonies: hence her tolerance for such grotesque demonstrations as the Feast of the Ass, the Pope of Fools, or the Boy Bishop. Indeed, the word *farce* is of ecclesiastical origin: it referred to the interpolation of remarks in the common tongue in the

---

[1] Exceptionally, the word Mystery was used to denote any kind of elaborate serious drama.

Kyrie Eleison or other parts of the service. In the same spirit, common traits, episodes, characters, or interludes were allowed in the mysteries, without offending the robust faith of our forefathers. After the Reformation, however, this feeling of security was shaken. It was feared that those dramas, with their crude realism and their farcical elements, would become a block of stumbling; and the Brothers of the Passion, in Paris, were enjoined in 1548 to stage no more sacred subjects. Between the mediæval religious play and the classical tragedy there is an abyss, which neither *Polyeucte* nor *Athalie* could bridge. The mysteries enjoyed a longer twilight in distant provinces; they have survived in a few outlying districts, the best known of which is Oberammergau. But these are mere curiosities: as a form of art the mediæval drama has perished utterly, without leaving any enduring masterpiece. Yet, religious and popular at the same time, it ought to have rivalled the national tragedy of the Greeks, just as the cathedral rivals and surpasses the Parthenon.

CHAPTER VII

THE UNIVERSITIES AND SCHOLASTICISM

§ 1. Parish, Cathedral, and Monastic Schools.

Clerc in old French meant at the same time a cleric and a scholar. The Church had an absolute monopoly of learning. As her mission was to teach the all-inclusive truth, i.e. the Christian revelation, she naturally had charge also of the subordinate truths, founded on tradition and human reason.

Every parish priest, even in small country places, was supposed to keep a school, with the object of recruiting candidates for the clergy. Of these schools very little is known. Humble though they were, they opened up even for peasant boys an avenue to the highest dignities in the Church. They were thus the most democratic element in mediæval society. The Hundred Years' War destroyed many of them, which were not fully restored for several centuries. Some villages which had a school under Saint Louis had to go without one under Napoleon I.

The "great schools" were those of the cathedrals and abbeys. Among the former, the best known were those of Rheims, Chartres, Angers, Orleans, Paris. At Rheims taught Gerbert, who became Pope under the name of Sylvester II (*d.* 1003); his learning seemed so uncanny to his generation that they had misgivings about its origin: a man who was able to use an abacus went a little too far for the safety of his eternal soul. The school of Chartres, founded in 990, was made famous by Fulbert, the gentle, pious, and learned, most beloved of his pupils.

The Benedictines had always devoted much attention to learning, and the Cluniacs were noted for their schools, in particular that of the Abbey of Saint Bénigne, under William of Dijon. Normandy, revitalized by the influx of Nordic blood, was soon covered with learned abbeys—Fécamp, Saint Wandrille, Saint Ouen, and, chief of all, Bec. There it was that a monk of Lombard origin, Lanfranc, opened in 1045 a school which became one of the greatest in Christendom. Pope Alexander II, in 1071, rose and took a few steps to meet Lanfranc, thus honouring, he said, " not the Archbishop of Canterbury, but the schoolmaster of Bec, at whose feet he had sat." Saint Anselm, the great theologian, also from Northern Italy, succeeded Lanfranc as Prior of Bec, headmaster of the school, and Primate of England. The monastic schools were invariably free ; the Cathedral schools, not unreasonably, charged a fee to the young nobles whose families could afford it. This led to abuses, which the monks were not slow to denounce, for the rivalry between regulars and seculars was singularly keen.

§ 2. Early Activities in Paris : Abelard.

The universal attraction of Paris was already felt. Early in the twelfth century the capital had three great centres of learning, the Cathedral School of Notre Dame, the Abbey of Saint Germain, and the Abbey of Saint Victor, founded by William of Champeaux. But there were also a number of independent masters. Of these, the most famous by far was that incomparable teacher Abelard (1079-1143). Impelled by a veritable passion for argument, endowed with a musical voice and a magnetic personality, this knight-errant of dialectics roamed the learned world, ready to tilt at any master's doctrine, seeking debate as the men-at-arms went in quest of tournament and adventure. It was his boast that he had driven William of Champeaux from the Paris school, and confuted in his own city old Anselm of Laon, one of the princes of theology. His success in Paris was immense ; multitudes flocked to hear him on Mount Saint Genevieve, a hill which is still the seat of the University of Paris. Fate placed Heloïse in his way : but he aided fate by a course of deliberate seduction, and the young girl, a singular blend of passion, pride, and learning, gave herself exultingly to the irresistible master. So complete was her devotion that she dissuaded him from marrying her, for such a step would have ruined his ecclesiastical career. However, they were wedded, but in secret, and he found it advisable to send his bride to a convent. Thereupon, the girl's uncle, believing he had been duped by

Abelard, "took upon him a vengeance as cruel and as irretrievable as it was vile and shameful." Abelard became a monk at Saint Denys; Heloïse the abbess of her convent. Long afterwards the two lovers resumed their correspondence. In Heloïse passion was purified, but not subdued: Abelard answered her with the gentle aloofness of the priest. Their bodies were buried in the same tomb.

We shall see later Aberlard's position in the great controversy of the time—the question of "universals," or general ideas. His method was to whet the wit of his scholars by arguing for and against all possible theses. We have the collection of his "Sic et Non," or Pros and Cons. It was a most admirable discipline no doubt: but by its right name it is called sophistry. Abelard, on the whole, was as much of a rationalist as one could be in those days, and an advocate of intellectual freedom. Naturally, his boldness of thought, his egotistic, self-advertising temper, the very brilliancy of his success, led him into constant difficulties with the ecclesiastical authorities. He seemed to court conflict: when he had to seek refuge at Saint Denys, he requited the hospitality of the famous church by exploding a tradition piously cherished for ages. He was repeatedly condemned, retired in a hermitage, drawing crowds to the desert after him, was confined in a cloister, sallied forth again, and was finally confronted, at the council of Sens, by the formidable dictator of the Western Church, Saint Bernard himself. Vain and shallow indeed, in the eyes of contemporaries, appeared the word-monger and the gymnast of thought, in contrast to the ascetic, the mystic, the man of prodigious deeds, burning love, and fierce jealousy for the Lord. Our free-thinking age has not reversed the verdict. But the sensational bout between men so illustrious and so different did not take place. Abelard, either abashed, or despairing of a fair trial, defaulted and was condemned unheard. He ended quietly his career of stormy notoriety as a Benedictine of Cluny.

§ 3. Evolution of the University of Paris.

By the end of the twelfth century there was already a cosmopolitan flock of students on the left bank of the Seine. Gradually this confused mass became organized, under the influence of three main causes. First of all, the necessity of defending against the lay authorities their privileges as members of the Church. In this they were absolutely successful: a provost, representing King Philip-Augustus, who had dared to interfere with turbulent students, forfeited his liberty, and even his life. The "Latin Quarter" was an ecclesiastical commonwealth independent of the King. Then there was a long struggle between the city of learning, now of European importance, and the Chancellor of Notre-Dame, agent of the Bishop of Paris. The school manifestly belonged not to the kingdom or to the diocese alone, but to the Church universal. In thus asserting its autonomy it could rely upon the support of the Papacy; for —and this is the third organizing influence—the popes, Innocent III in particular, were attempting directly to control all the great activities within the Church, and could not overlook such a factor as this.

The University was not, as we have seen, a single school expanding in orderly fashion: it was a confused aggregation of cosmopolitan students and masters, which gradually, and by the usual method, conflict, grew conscious of its unity and extended its privileges. Its corporate existence was recognized by Royal Charter about 1200; it received a definite statute from the Pope's Legate in 1215; and the Bull Parens Scientiarum, in 1231, was its Magna Charta.

Within this learned multitude we discern a threefold process of organization. In 1219 the different "Faculties" or groups of studies are first mentioned. By 1222 the scholars, especially those of the Faculty of Arts, the most numerous of all, had formed regional clubs or *Nations*: these, numerous at first, were finally reduced to four—French, Picard, Norman, and English.[1] Finally, hostels or colleges were founded for the poor students. One of them, due to the liberality of Robert of Sorbon, in 1257, finally gave its name, in a loose sense, to the whole theological school, and to the main building of the present university, la Sorbonne. Other colleges—Montaigu, Navarre, Harcourt, had a long and creditable history. Although a few Parisian institutions can claim descent from the mediæval colleges (i.e. Lycée Saint Louis from Collège d'Harcourt), the system has not survived in Paris as it has in Oxford or Cambridge.

The Friars' schools were somewhat akin in organization and purpose to the colleges. It was not without bitter quarrels that the Mendicants forced their way into the universities. The Pope's favour secured for them the privilege of teaching, even without a regular degree. Entrenched in their own houses, they were apt to disregard the decisions of the governing board. When a "cessation" or strike was decreed—for the mediæval clergy were great believers in the efficacy of the general strike—the monks were accused of acting as scabs or blacklegs. They were vehemently denounced by William of Saint Amour in his "Brief Tract on Latter-Day Perils" (1255). Saint Amour was exiled, and the Mendicants triumphed. But a *modus vivendi* was reached, and they accepted the discipline of the university. The popes, therefore, did not quite succeed in obtaining full control of the great Parisian school. The influence of the secular and national clergy remained so strong that, in the quarrel between Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII, the Sorbonne supported the King.

---

[1] The German nation was later substituted for the English.

This, however, was a dangerous precedent. During the Hundred Years' War the university became constantly involved in the politics of the time. It followed mostly the Burgundian party, even in its alliance with the butcher Caboche or with the English. It recognized Henry VI, and connived in the condemnation of Joan of Arc. This political rôle was a source of weakness. The great Schism absorbed unprofitably much of the time and energy of the masters. At the same moment, it seemed as though mediæval philosophy, turning for three centuries in the same circle, had at last exhausted itself. For all these causes the decadence of the Sorbonne in the fifteenth century was profound, and could not be stayed even by such men as Pierre d'Ailli and Jehan Gerson. Then came the printing press, the veritable university of the modern age—little as some masters have even yet realized its possibilities. From the Renaissance to the Revolution—we might even say until a generation or so ago—the universities were but a minor factor in French culture.

§ 4. LIFE AND STUDIES.

Many of the students, clerics though they were, led singularly unedifying lives. The "Goliards," as the most riotous of them were called, were little better than vagabonds. Self-support through menial service, as it still exists in

America, was not unknown in the mediæval universities: but the meaning of self-support seems to have been stretched so as to cover petty larceny. Villon, a whilom student, who wrote some of his masterpieces in jail and under the shadow of the gallows, was exceptional only in his genius. The poor student, neither fish nor fowl—a cleric without benefice, a layman without a trade—formed a picturesque rather than a reputable element in mediæval society. The fabliaux are full of his mad pranks. He might turn, according to the whim of fate, into a monk, a minstrel, or a pickpocket. There is a lesson in the fact that the same Celtic word which in English became *truant* meant in French beggar and thief.

The narrow streets of the Latin Quarter—a few of which are still as irregular and as unsanitary as in those days—were teeming with tumultuous life. Brawls and carousals, no doubt; but piety also, and genuine democracy, and a wonderful eagerness for sacred and profane knowledge. The solemn procession of the university to the Lendit—the great pilgrimage and fair of Saint Denys—must have been magnificent indeed, stretching, if chroniclers are to be credited, over miles of street and lane. Dialectics had become a sport and a passion; perhaps it was at that time that the French acquired the taste for protracted and animated logical discussion, which is still one of their characteristics.

The general, or preparatory course, somewhat akin to our undergraduate department, comprised the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, dialectics or logic) and the *quadrivium* (arithemetic, geometry, astronomy, and music). These were the seven Liberal Arts; the School or Faculty of Arts, by far the most numerous, was also the most influential. Its *Rector* was the head of the whole university.

By the side of the Faculty of Arts were found the professional schools: medicine (*physica*), civil and canon law (*leges* and *decretum*), and theology (*pagina sacra*). The universities specialized in one or two of these branches—a tendency which is still the rule in modern France. Montpellier, for instance, the oldest French school after Paris, taught civil law and medicine; Toulouse, civil and canon law, with some theology; Orleans and Angers, arts and law. Civil law was not taught at Paris: for that subject Bologna remained the most active centre; canon law, without the support of civil law, did not flourish; but Paris was unique in Western Europe for the study of theology. It was the theological school of Paris that deserved the name: "Reason teaching within the Church"—*Ratio dictans in Ecclesia*—and of which it was said: "The Pope and the University of Paris are the two lights of the world"—*Papa et Universitas Parisiensis duo lumina mundi.* In the common heritage Germany had seized the *Imperium,* Italy the *Sacerdotium,* France the *studium,* the three great fountains of prestige and power.

The method of teaching consisted in reading classical text-books, such as Donatus in grammar, Cicero in rhetoric, Porphyrius in dialectics, and especially Boethius, the universal interpreter of classical antiquity, the authority in arithmetic and music as well as in philosophy. As late as the thirteenth century Greek was practically unknown, and Aristotle himself was studied through translations and commentaries in Latin. Everywhere we find the same worship of tradition and the same confidence in formal logic. There was one striking exception: Roger Bacon (1214–1294), a Franciscan, who studied for many years in Paris; he dared to inveigh against the blind worship of tradition, to denounce the mob-rule of "common consent," and the charlatanism of the wiseacres who conceal their ignorance under pompous forms; he dared to make a plea for the experimental method, four centuries before his great namesake. Bacon is not free from the blemishes of his time: vagueness combined with subtlety of thought, credulity, and an arrogant temper. It is by no means easy to make out what he had in mind when he extolled his "scientia experimentalis" above all others; and he ascribed to a certain Master Peter of Maricourt knowledge and power beyond the range of sober fact.[1] Yet he strikes us as a man of the sixteenth century, perhaps even of the twentieth, curiously astray in the thirteenth. Needless to say that to be an anachronism is to court persecution. Men of the twenty-fifth century would not have an easy time of it in the present enlightened age.

Weakness of Mediæval Science.

The absence of any criterion but conformity to contradictory and ill-defined traditions, left mediæval learning extraordinarily weak. In the pseudo-scientific treatises, “ Bestiaries ” and “ Lapidaries,” books on Medicine, Astrology, Alchemy, we are appalled at the way in which plain facts are mingled with ancient fables, and also with what must seem like deliberate fantasy. The mediæval conception of truth was, to put it diplomatically, more complex and more tolerant than ours. Even in sacred things, forgeries (the Decretals), spurious relics, faked miracles, were not infrequent. By the side of ardent faith we find a no less intense will-to-make-believe. Before condemning mediæval thought root and branch, we should remember that passionate conviction has still the same power of obfuscating the critical sense. Rather should we say that plain facts were spurned, as the merest tokens of spiritual truths, which alone were of any import. What matters it whether the unicorn be real or fabulous, whether the eagle and the phœnix actually renew their youth, and the pelican feed its brood with its own vitals, if they give us an adumbration of the one thing needful? The Christocentric conception pervaded all forms of human knowledge. Just as, willy-nilly, every incident in the Old Testament was made to pre-figure some scene in the New, just as the Song of Solomon was transmuted into a mystic epithalamium of Christ and His Church, natural history was also pressed into the service of religious truth. We may pride ourselves on the progress of our critical sense: perhaps we should also deplore the decline of spirituality, which has taken away from the pelican its symbolical value, and left it but an ugly bird.

---

[1] Cf. in Picavet, *Philosophies et Théologies Médiévales,* a curious study on this semi-mythical character.

§ 5. MEDIÆVAL PHILOSOPHY.

Early Stages.

At any rate, the Middle Ages tackled boldly the essential problem of Christian culture, the reconciliation of revelation and reason. This had been attempted, with subtle power and passionate zeal, by the Greek and Latin Fathers—the most influential of whom was Augustine. Christianity, immediately after the apostolic age, can indeed be defined as the light of Jesus refracted through Neo-Platonic philosophy. In the West these high speculations had come to an end when the Barbarian flood broke through the crumbling wall of Roman organization. The best that could be done was hastily to salvage something of the ancient heritage.

The most successful worker in that field was Boethius (*c.* 475–525), a counsellor of Theodoric the Ostrogoth. He translated Aristotle and other classics; he became the universal tutor of the Middle Ages, and his "Consolation of Philosophy" retained, until the sixteenth century, a prestige second only to that of Holy Writ. Alfred translated it into Anglo-Saxon, and the earliest text in Langue d'Oc is an adaptation of Boethius. Boethius still stands in the setting light of Rome: Isidore, Bishop of Seville (*d.* 636), the next link in the transmission of thought, is groping in darkness. He is the author of encyclopædic compendia, and in particular of "Sentences" or excerpts from the Fathers, which were long in use as a theological text-book. With the Carolingian renaissance, the slow reconquest of ancient learning, especially of Patristic lore, was started, but no original contribution was made. Under Charles the Bald, however, the leaven was first seen to work; there were theologians who were not satisfied with excerpts and compendia, but who were able to think and to discuss. Hincmar, the great Bishop of Rheims, engaged in a controversy on Predestination with Gottschalk, a German monk. The assistance of John the Scot (Erigena) was sought. John's arguments, however, were found questionable from the orthodox point of view; but in fields of his own choosing Erigena displayed extraordinary genius. This "Father of the Schoolmen," as he has frequently been miscalled, was not a deductive logician, but a metaphysician and a mystic, whose natural place would have been in Athens, Alexandria, or nineteenth-century Germany. Such anachronisms as Erigena and Roger Bacon make us wonder whether all the possibilities of the human mind have not been present at all times—only stifled by the crassness of the Zeitgeist; and wonder also what may be the aspects of truth that we are ignoring or suppressing to-day.

Scholasticism.

Scholasticism, properly so-called—the application of formal logic to the data of revelation—may be said to begin in the middle of the eleventh century, with the controversy between Lanfranc, the schoolmaster of Bec, and Berengar of Tours (1054). No one will be so bold as to prophesy the hour of its death: for all we know, it may be eternal. But by the end of the fourteenth century it had lost much of its vitality, and after the Renaissance it has never regained its prestige. Scholasticism is thus exactly co-extensive with the Middle Ages proper, and may be described as a manifestation of the mediæval spirit.

Of the great schoolmen, Lanfranc, Anselm, Bonaventura, Thomas Aquinas, were Italians; Alexander of Hales, John of Salisbury, Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, Occam, were Britishers; Hugo of St. Victor and Albertus Magnus were Germans; Alan of Lille was a Fleming; Gerbert, William of Champeaux, Abelard, Bernard of Chartres, Bernard of Clairvaux, Roscellin, Gilbert de la Porrée, were Frenchmen. But these distinctions were meaningless in the Middle Ages: all these men were citizens of the Christian commonwealth —the intellectual capital of which was the University of Paris. It was so impossible to identify any master with any definite country that the birthplace of "Alanus de Insulis" was sought in every "island" in Western Christendom, from Sicily to Ireland, until the claims of Lille in Flanders were established.

The "Universals."

Roughly speaking, the history of scholasticism can be divided into three periods. In the earliest (eleventh to twelfth centuries) the works of Aristotle were still imperfectly known. St. Anselm evolved his "ontological" argument: the existence of God was proved by the very existence in our minds of the concept of absolute perfection. But does a concept involve actuality? The central problem —which still lies at the foundation of all consistent thinking —was that of general ideas, or "universals." When we speak of "man," for instance, what reality corresponds to that term? Is there an idea of man in the abstract, anterior and superior to all individual men? Is there a genus man, not indeed separable from the existence of men, but of which men are but the diverse manifestations? Or is the term a mere word, used for convenience' sake? Or again, is it more than a word, and yet less than an objective reality—a concept of the human mind?

St. Anselm, William of Champeaux (1070–1121), and Gilbert de la Porrée maintained the *reality* of universals. They were called realists. Realism in this very special sense is almost synonymous with idealism, for the reality ascribed to universals is that of Plato's ideas. Roscellin reduced their existence to mere words : he was a nominalist. Abélard took the eclectic view : he was a conceptualist. Naturally enough, realism was the official, conservative doctrine ; it is easy to see how nominalism or even conceptualism would lead away from the solemn abstractions upon which theology was based, and favour straight rationalism or positivism.

Aristotle.

The change in the second period of scholasticism was due to the introduction of Aristotle's complete works, early in the thirteenth century. The Crusade which established the Latins in Constantinople in 1204 is partly responsible for this ; but it was chiefly through the Arabs and the Jews of Andalusia and Southern France that the Greek master reached the Christian West. Aristotle, with his impressive encyclopædic knowledge, and his maturity of thought, secured an authority which seemed to be almost co-ordinate with that of the Bible. The intellectual dictatorship of a Pagan, however, was not accepted without qualms, especially when his works were flanked by the commentaries of an infidel, Avicenna or Averroes ; a ban was placed in 1210–15 upon the "natural philosophy" and the metaphysics of the Stagirite. But this ban, never lifted, was quietly ignored. The delight in a richer source of knowledge overcame all scruples, and Aristotle became indeed the Master, whose Ipse dixit was law. The task of the school was thenceforward to put the truths of religion in Aristotelian form.

Golden Age of Scholasticism. Saint Thomas Aquinas.

The Aristotelian revelation, the tremendous growth of the University of Paris, and the fact that in all domains the mediæval mind was reaching its maturity, brought about the golden age of scholasticism. Strangely enough, the Friars, whose collaboration was not welcome by the older elements in the university, and who had been created for active work rather than for speculative research, took the lead in scholastic philosophy. It was a Franciscan, Alexander of Hales, the Irrefragable Doctor (*d.* 1248), who first made systematic use of Aristotelism. Bonaventura, the Seraphic Doctor (1221–74), Roger Bacon, the Wonderful Doctor (1214–*c.*–1294), Duns Scotus, the Most Subtle Doctor (1265 ?–1308), were Franciscans. Albertus Magnus, the Universal Doctor (1193–1280) and Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor (1225–74), were Dominicans. The great achievement of the age were those all-embracing treatises, those Summæ, of which the most impressive and the most enduring was that of Saint Thomas.

After that unique moment of splendour, under Saint Louis, when faith, institutions, art, literature, seemed in perfect harmony, scholasticism began to deteriorate. Bacon is visibly ill at ease in the thin abstract atmosphere of his time. Duns Scotus had the honour of being pitted against Saint Thomas, and the quarrels of Thomists and Scottists filled the schools ; but the over-subtle doctor did much to ruin the cause he served with such indefatigable and perverse ingenuity ; his name has become a by-word : dunce. Occam (*d.* 1347) revived nominalism, but already the force of scholasticism was spent. It was fast becoming that which we now mean by that term : interminable and pedantic disputations on points remote from any spiritual or material reality, a logical mill grinding nought.

Yet the effort, in sheer magnitude, is one of the most impressive in the history of thought. If some of its manifestations were childish, are we certain that the same verdict will not be passed upon much of our modern research ? Before we call it barren, we must remember that the great synthesis of Saint Thomas was considered as still valid by Pope Leo XIII, in whom unbelievers recognized one of the keenest minds of the nineteenth century.

BOOK II

LAY SOCIETY

CHAPTER I

THE FEUDAL REGIME

§ 1. ANARCHY AND "FIST-LAW."

UNDER any settled government—be the form republican or monarchical—order is preserved by a public force, the power of which is moral rather than material. This power rests upon gratitude for past services, confidence that the law will be enforced, knowledge that, if challenged, it can enlist overwhelming support. All these elements are woven into state consciousness; they are the reserve strength of which the actual police is but the token. If this consciousness be weakened, the State becomes a shadow, and men fall back upon the realities which need no philosophizing: food and downright force. Such a weakening was taking place during the decline of the Roman Empire. It was stayed by the rough energy of the Franks, and particularly of Charlemagne; but it set in again under his feeble successors, accelerated by their inability to cope with the Norman peril. Between Charles the Bald and Louis VI the Fat, there was an almost total eclipse of the royal power, with consequent development of the "organized confusion" called feudalism.

The dissolution of the State would lead to sheer anarchy, if food could be produced when wanted and consumed forthwith. But agricultural labour yields only yearly crops, and one first step in organization is necessary. If there is to be any plunder for the strong, there must be comparative peace for the men who till the soil. Thus arises a landed, aristocratic, and military regime, in which the dominant minority keep the rest at work, giving them in return a certain measure of protection. This stage of society may be defined as the local checking of anarchy by energetic individuals, or the splitting up of the State into independent principalities, each small enough to be controlled by the rough and ready power of a single chieftain. This was the reality underlying the elaborate system of early feudalism. It existed in its completeness wherever we find isolated barons, at the head of a small band, ruling directly their little territory, and owing no allegiance except to a distant and shadowy king. Such was the case in parts of Germany and of the French South. Taine's picture of the early nobility and of its services as protector of the countryside assumes such a condition. The barons, masters by the right of their strong hand, may be ideally described as an hereditary police; they may almost as accurately be defined as successful brigands. The two terms are correlative, and, in a chaotic state of society, often interchangeable. The most striking instance of the pirate turning into a legitimate ruler, the defender of law and order, is that of Duke Rollo the Northman. On a smaller scale, we have seen similar cases of late in Morocco and Mexico.

§ 2. Confusion between Property and Authority.

Under such a regime, the men actually in control of the territory would inevitably assume, or usurp, political authority. This process had been going on long before the almost complete collapse of the monarchy in the tenth century. Indeed, it went back to Roman times. The owners of large estates, with a numerous servile population, had disciplinary and administrative rights, a sort of patrimonial jurisdiction, which closely bordered on the usual function of government. The monks, who had been pioneers, and who were efficient managers, resented the interference of the King's representatives, who might be ignorant warriors; so they secured the privilege of *immunity*, which made them practically sovereign in their domains. This privilege was extended to laymen as well. Theoretically the King's authority was unimpaired: but it was exercised through the landowners themselves instead of through appointed agents. A confusion was thus arising between property and authority.

The very agents of the King were gradually slipping from his hold. The Merovingians had found it convenient to assign to their officials, instead of a salary, the income from certain estates. By the treaty of Andelot, in 587, these estates or benefices were granted for life, and not merely for a term of office. It happened that the dukes, counts, viscounts, were selected from among the great landowners. An efficient, strongly centralized state can afford to appoint agents of no personal standing, deriving all their authority from above; a weak state is compelled to rely upon the local magnates, who lend as much prestige to the Government as they receive from it. These men, who held hereditary property in their own right, and State property for life, would naturally tend to consider both as equally theirs. By a series of edicts, particularly the Capitulary of Kierzy-sur-Oise in 877, their functions became in fact hereditary, and this entailed the heredity of the estates attached to the function. Thus the confusion between sovereignty and property became complete. In certain cases the barons had usurped authority because they had property; in other cases they had usurped property because they had authority. In all cases, the one clear title was possession defended by force. In the eleventh century it was recognized as a principle that "a baron was sovereign in his barony"; he had his banner, his seal, his court of justice, his coinage, his little army, with which he could wage war against other barons, and even against the King. Force had thus received the sanction of custom, which was the only law.

§ 3. Hierarchy of Landowners.

As a consequence of the prevailing anarchy, the freeholders, owning a piece of land or alleu, gradually disappeared. For the sake of protection they had, more or less willingly, to surrender their estate into the hands of a more powerful personage. The title passed to the protector; but he would grant the usufruct—in fact, the hereditary usufruct—of the land to its original owner. Thus the allodial tenure was changed into a fief. This practice became also a point of law: it was not admitted that a man should be without an overlord. In the south the feudal system never reached its completeness, and there remained a number of freeholders. In the north a few survived, but their position ceased to be understood. The kinglet of

Yvetot (Normandy), sung by Béranger, must have been a local landowner who had somehow escaped the meshes of feudalism.

The Church, whose domains were so vast, whose power was great and whose rule was, comparatively, efficient and mild, received many such estates, which she granted again as fiefs. This feudalizing process was not wholly voluntary on her part; Charles-Martel, needing the assistance of a costly cavalry against the Saracens, rewarded military support with Church land. The title remained with the Church, but the fruit, all but a small fee, went to the lay beneficiaries. Lesser lords would repeat this confiscatory operation whenever they had a chance: not seldom would the advocatus or defender of the Church secure for himself, as a fief, a notable part of the domain that he was supposed to protect.

It will readily be seen that the landholding system, with which the political and social system was bound up, was thus becoming extraordinarily complicated; it involved several separate principles, slowly permeating each other. Property was in a sense much richer and fuller than in our own days, since it entailed sovereign rights. On the other hand, it did not possess the absolute character that nineteenth-century economists claimed for it; it was in the nature of a delegation and of a personal contract. Three elements which as a rule are now distinct were thus united—property, sovereignty, and service.

Granting of Fiefs—Homage.

Each feudal lord is therefore bound to some higher lord, his suzerain, by whose grant he is supposed to hold his estate. This relation is expressed by the essential ceremony of *homage.* The vassal kneels before his suzerain, and pledges him his loyalty. He swears upon the Gospel, or upon relics, that he will fulfil his duties as a vassal, and presents to his suzerain some symbolical object—a pair of gloves or of spurs, a cup, a horse. The suzerain, in his turn, gives the vassal the kiss of peace, and invests him with his estate or fief. The contract is personal. Therefore it has to be renewed if either vassal or suzerain should die. The vassal may disown his suzerain, but by so doing he forfeits his estate. The suzerain may withdraw the grant, but only for non-fulfilment of the contract. In theory, therefore, the homage was clearly akin to an oath of office.

Feudal Duties.

The duties involved in the feudal contract were reciprocal, but, naturally enough, they were more definite in the case of the vassal. First of all, he owes his suzerain military service at least for a specified number of days; his castle must be at the disposal of his lord in case of need. He is bound to attend his court, either for judicial purposes or in order to enhance the magnificence of certain ceremonies. He has to pay "relief," as a sort of inheritance tax. He owes his lord financial support, the "aids," to help him meet extraordinary expenses.[1] The vassal was also expected to entertain the suzerain and his retinue when he chose to visit the estate. He could not in any way "abridge" the fief, that is to say do anything that might diminish its value, without the consent of the suzerain. For everything that could affect the service he owed, the suzerain's permission was necessary: like an officer in a modern European army, he could not marry or take a distant journey without leave. The suzerain was the guardian of his vassal's orphans; he administered their estate, and could give the daughters in marriage.

§ 4. APPEAL AND CONTRADICTIONS OF THE FEUDAL SYSTEM.

There is something very attractive about this system. The conception of property as a trust and as a personal reward for service is undoubtedly nobler than the "bourgeois" doctrine of property as a sacred right. In this fundamental question we are fast returning to the mediæval ideal; property owners who do not hold themselves to be, in a large measure, public servants, bound to pay aid and relief to their suzerain, the community, are an antiquated and dwindling group. There is a strong appeal also in the idea of a class bound together by a strict code of honour, united by contract and not by compulsion, and whose relations were hallowed by the double brotherhood of soldiers and Christians. Unfortunately, feudalism as a system is a retrospective Utopia. Feudalism in its heyday was unconscious: everyone grabbed land and power within his reach. The regime which resulted was not codified until it had begun to wane. We derive our theories from the *feudists* of the thirteenth century, or from the laws of countries where a new feudal class was introduced as the result of conquest: England under the Normans, Palestine, the Eastern Empire under Latin rule. But the last two were artificial and short-lived, and English feudalism, far from being a pure type, was combined with and checked by a powerful monarchy. As a matter of fact, the essence of the regime which prevailed in the Early Middle Ages was neither "the confusion of property and authority" nor "the delegation of property as a reward for service." It was, at first, chaos roughly organized; later on, confusion perpetuated by custom.

---

[1] These feudal aids were generally required in four cases: when the lord was prisoner and had to be ransomed; when he was going to the crusade; when his son was knighted; when his daughter was married.

Heredity v. Merit.

The usual definitions of feudalism are an *ex post facto* ideal. This ideal was never realized, because the regime contained two inner contradictions which ruined its value. The first is the contradiction between merit and heredity. If property, with authority attached thereto, is delegated as a reward for services performed or promised, a merit system is implied. We have seen that the Church trembled for a while between the two principles of heredity and merit; finally, heredity was sacrificed, and merit—of a kind—prevailed. In feudalism, on the contrary, heredity became the rule. By this the feudal relation was bereft of its meaning. There was really no free choice, no personal contract, no spontaneous feeling of loyalty between suzerain and vassal: a man was your overlord simply because he had been your father's. This does not mean that the feudal virtues had no real existence. They were bound to grow, as they survive to-day, wherever there was caste-consciousness and long association. But the ceremony of homage was more of a form than of a reality. Hence the insincerity, the punctilious insistency upon symbols and details, the strange lapses from generosity and good faith, which surprise and repel us in feudal practice.

"Real" v. "Personal" Relations.

The second contradiction is that the feudal bond affected both persons and lands, and that duties which should be essentially personal became attached to the possession of the land. The owner of such an estate, whoever he might be, owed allegiance to such a lord: the estate might be transferred, with the feudal duty as a mere encumbrance. With the constant splitting up and aggregation of property the feudal relations would get hopelessly tangled. According to the ideal plan, feudal society was a symmetrical pyramid: every nobleman should have but one overlord, who, in his turn, with his peers, would be bound to one higher still, until the apex is reached—the King, who holds his rights from God, under the spiritual guidance of Holy Church. Instead of this definite and attractive system we find a state of affairs in which a great lord might be, for a certain estate, the vassal of one of his vassals. The Count of Champagne held only part of his land from his rightful sovereign the King of France; he held the rest from the German Emperor, from the Duke of Burgundy, from two archbishops and four bishops, and from the Abbot of Saint Denys. Under such conditions the feudal tie was a mockery. Each oath of loyalty had to be accompanied by reservations. The failure of the system is proved by the fact that it never prevented war, not only among unrelated barons, but between vassal and sovereign. The principles and the forms of society might be feudal; but once more the basic factors were force and custom.

At the time when the central government was all but obliterated, the West did not sink into utter anarchy. Should we thank feudalism for that? Or should we thank the Church? Or again, should we wonder at the hardihood of civilization, which refuses to die? During the great revival of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries feudalism seemed to provide the very framework of society; but it was already by that time a regressive element, we might almost say a survival. The real driving power was found in the Church, the communes, and the monarchy.

The feudal age and the monarchical age blend into each other like dissolving pictures. The King never disappeared altogether, but for a time he was merely, more perhaps in theory than in actual fact, the apex of the feudal system.

By the thirteenth century the inner life of feudalism was gone, but its trappings and privileges remained—indeed, the trappings were never so gorgeous, nor the privileges so exorbitant, as when its principle of existence had ebbed away. Louis XI, Richelieu, Louis XIV, still had to strip feudalism of some of its rights. It did not receive its death-blow until the 4th August 1789. And its ghost is still feebly haunting us—in the names, titles, armorial bearings, landed property, military traditions, social prestige, and class consciousness of the nobility. Without any thought of disrespect, M. de Curel, himself an aristocrat, described these survivals as "Fossils."

Note I. Feudal and Manorial.—Strictly speaking, the feudal relation exists only among members of the dominant class. The relations between the dominant class and their tenants or serfs form the manorial system. The manorial system answers to Guizot's definition of feudalism, i.e. the confusion of authority and property; but it does not fully cover the other element: the granting out of property as a reward for service rendered or pledged. However, the distinction should not be made hard and fast. The feeling of loyalty, almost of clannishness, which many peasants undoubtedly entertained for their masters was essentially feudal. Feudal dues, rent, and servile taxes came to be almost undistinguishable. The abuses which were abolished at the time of the Revolution belonged almost entirely to the manorial system; yet they were invariably referred to as feudal.

Note II. Romanists and Germanists.—For generations scholars were divided, as to the origins of feudalism, between the Romanist and the Germanist schools. We find in Roman Gaul the lineaments of a system akin to feudalism: the subordination of man to man, of client to patron, by means of the *commendation*, or *patrocinium*; the usufructuary tenure, revokable at the will of the grantor, or *precarium*; and even the combination of the two, the subordination of land to land, *patrocinium fundorum*. The Germans brought with them the personal bond uniting a leader and his companion, the *comitatus*. The Frankish *antrustiones*, members of the King's "trust," bear a certain resemblance to the Gallic *ambacti*. As, in many historical instances, conquest had created a privileged class—it still does so under our eyes in countries like Algeria—it was assumed that the feudal nobility was descended from the Frankish invaders. Such, as we have seen, was the opinion of Boulainvilliers, of Abbé Sieyès, and of many historians in the early nineteenth century. It seems now established that the Merovingian aristocracy was of mixed origin, and its prerogatives could not accurately be called feudal. Charlemagne attempted to check the growth of feudalism, which was not fully established until the fusion of the races was complete. Feudalism is, indeed, the result of military domination, but it is not the domination of one people over another: it was locally, through luck, cunning, and prowess, that certain men rose to power. It may be noted that feudalism is not exclusively a Western European phenomenon; it occurred in distant parts of the world, such as Mexico, Japan, Madagascar, and Abyssinia. The charters granted to certain colonial companies as late as the end of the nineteenth century could be described as a return to feudalism. Let us note finally that although feudalism was essentially a form of land tenure, it could be extended so as to cover miscellaneous privileges. Certain dues or taxes could be given out as a fief. The hereditary imperial postmastership of the Counts of Thurn and Taxis was a non-territorial fief.

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE OF THE FIGHTING CASTE

§ 1. THE FIGHTING SPIRIT.

THE nobles were, by origin and by profession, a fighting caste; this was their *raison d'être:* they fought for the community as the clergy prayed and the commoners toiled. They drove off the invaders, Saracens, Normans, Magyars, or "Ogres." They sallied forth, fighting still and conquering, in England, Portugal, Sicily, and later Jerusalem and Constantinople. In the interval they fought lustily among themselves. Or, for lack of nobler game, they killed and plundered merchants, monks, and peasants; to vary their pleasures, they burnt a few villages. Private war and brigandage were the twin curses of the time. No doubt the barons were, as Taine puts it, an hereditary police; but *quis custodiet ipsos custodes*?

Christianity and Odin-Worship.

This fundamental pugnacity is in radical contradiction with the spirit of the Prince of Peace. In their lives, if not in their creed, the mediæval lords were Odin-worshippers. A Christian knight was too frequently a half-tamed tiger, who at any moment might turn furiously against his keeper: the early epic, which voices the sentiments of the nobility, is full of the uttermost contempt for the clerics, those cowards who can only pray. Yet those ruthless warriors were scrupulous Catholics, after a fashion. A chieftain might set fire to a village, or even to a monastery, but refuse meat on a Friday. Some, no doubt, had a genuine sense of their responsibility; with the others, superstitious fears took the place of spiritual duty. Some among the most high-handed repented, like the legendary Robert the Devil of Normandy, and went on a long and perilous pilgrimage—a penance congenial to their adventurous souls. Others, on their death-bed, strove to atone for their misdeeds with pious foundations. In the wild gamble of such lives, the Church was not seldom the ultimate gainer.

We have seen how she strove to minimize the evil: she tried to restrict private warfare through the Peace and the Truce of God; she sought to Christianize the military life by giving knighthood a religious character; she directed the fighting spirit into what she conceived to be a useful channel, the Crusades. She met with but indifferent success. The Christian veneer did not alter the essential roughness of the knight, and the story of the Crusades is anything but edifying. The royal power alone was able to curb this turbulent nobility; but the process was a tedious one. At the close of the Middle Ages the nobles were still keeping up their personal feuds, even when the country was perishing. Murders and massacres marked the rivalry between Armagnac and Burgundians. Even when the nobility had grown refined in its tastes and manners, the deep-seated barbarism of the fighter might break forth at any moment.

§ 2. Equestrian Origin of the Fighting Caste.

In Merovingian times the army was open to all free men, Gallo-Romans as well as Franks. Charles Martel needed a mounted force to withstand the swift cavalry of the Saracens. To this fact may be traced the inception of the fighting caste. The horseman, heavily protected, became the man-at-arms *par excellence.* He had little to fear from the common foot soldier, whom he began to despise. Of this equestrian origin of the nobility traces survive even to-day. A cavalry officer enjoys higher social prestige than an artillery-man or an engineer; in England, at least, horsemanship, not scholarship, is the distinctive trait of a thorough gentleman; the most exclusive body in France, the most carefully fenced against interlopers, is not the Académie Française, but the Jockey-Club. Horse and armour were expensive; to wield the huge sword or the spear, when weighted down by the shield and the thick coat of mail, required unusual bodily strength combined with prolonged training. Although a lusty peasant might still fight his way to prominence, membership in the knightly class became more and more a jealously guarded privilege. By the thirteenth century this evolution, which had long been under way, was complete : the military order had become a caste, and spurned the rabble. Their loathing for the people seemed almost akin in its intensity to colour prejudice, and has often, but erroneously, been ascribed to race hatred. Nobles and commoners belonged to the same race, or to the same racial medley. But the nobles had evolved a caste feeling which would cause them to suspend their quarrels in order to crush any rebellion of the peasants ; whilst their superior equipment and their impregnable castles made it easy for them to maintain their privileges against a vast but ill-armed and unorganized mob. Imagine a trust or a labour union with a monopoly of tanks and machine-guns : they would soon become an aristocracy by the grace of God, and retain their proud position until their armament had become obsolete. Artillery alone, so expensive that only the greatest feudal lords could afford it, so powerful that the moving fortress of steel, or even the huge fortress of stone, could not stand against it, ruined the predominance of the fighting caste.

§ 3. Education.

The education of a nobleman, therefore, was nothing but training for warfare. Learning was left to the clerics, and a lord would heavily scrawl his mark under such a formula as : " The said —— has declared that he could not write, *being a gentleman*." As a child, he was sent away from his father's castle, and apprenticed to some powerful patron. In his suzerain's court he learned the technique of his profession, first as a page, then as a squire. Oddly enough, this apprenticeship was combined with menial service : to approach a social superior, even in the capacity of a valet, was an honourable privilege. This conception is said to be of German origin, and survived at the Court of France as long as the Capetian monarchy. When the young noble became of age, and had approved himself a master of his craft, he could become a knight. Knighthood and nobility were not absolutely co-extensive. In the south, where class distinctions never were so sharp as in the north, the burghers were not debarred from knightly honours.

On the other hand, many a poor gentleman had to remain a squire all his life.

Knighthood.

Knighthood meant nothing more at first than the formal admission of a young nobleman into the privileged warrior class. The ceremony (dubbing) was extremely simple, and could be performed by any knight: the candidate's father, for instance, or more frequently the patron at whose court he had been brought up. The essential act—the significance of which is obscure—was the *colée*, or blow of the fist on the nape of the neck. The intricate and expensive ceremonial, fraught with religious symbolism, was of later introduction. No doubt the crusading spirit had much to do with this transformation of the knightly ideal, just as in these Oriental expeditions were elaborated some of the trappings of the caste, such as the coats of arms. The military orders provided a model which the individual secular knight might be expected to keep before his eyes. Unfortunately in those fighting monks, the roughness of a soldier's life proved a more potent influence than the holiness of their purpose: "to swear and drink like a Templar" soon became a byword. We have seen crusaders in our days; they were not all Sir Galahads all the time.

The mediæval knight is transfigured in our imagination as the embodiment of soldierly, Christian, and courtly perfections. Needless to say that such an ideal is mostly a delusion: cruelty and deceit were the besetting sins of the fighting nobility. Yet it would be excessive to denounce it as entirely a mystification of the romancers in the thirteenth century and of the Romanticists in the nineteenth. Such perfect knights did exist. Foremost, perhaps, was Godfrey of Bouillon, the leader of the First Crusade, the modest Defender of the Holy Sepulchre; then Richard the Lion-Hearted, a picturesque if not a faultless character; Saint Louis, dauntless as well as gentle; Joan of Arc, in whom were blended the two ideals of the age, the virgin and the warrior; and a pure mediæval figure in the early dawn of the Renaissance, Bayard, without fear and without reproach.

§ 4. Castles.

As the barons were fighters, their homes were fortresses. The Roman villa, with its stately and smiling mansion, had long since assumed a more military aspect. During the Norman invasions the castle was essentially a stockade, behind which the whole countryside could take refuge. The full-grown mediæval castle was well-nigh impregnable, except by ruse, surprise, and famine. A wide moat, which generally could be flooded, formed the first line of defence. Then rose a continuous wall, battlemented and reinforced by round towers. A drawbridge led to a strong gate, closed at both ends by iron gratings or portcullis. Within the wall, in the large court or bailey, stood the chapel and other buildings. A second wall encircled an inner court, and at last the donjon or keep was reached—a huge tower in which the beleaguered baron could still defy his enemies. Some of these castles were rebuilt or radically transformed at the time of the Renaissance, like the old Louvre of the French kings. Many were destroyed by the monarchy, during the religious wars and under Richelieu. But there are still a few which, although sadly dismantled, can give us an idea of these abodes of gloom and pride : Vincennes, at the gates of Paris, for instance, or Angers. The keep of Coucy, a tremendous cylinder of stone, was one of the most impressive ruins in the country ; it has been wantonly shattered by the Germans during the Great War. The manors of the lesser nobility offered the same characteristics on a smaller scale. A few nobles in the north, many more in the south, lived in the cities : their town houses, with turrets and battlements, carried out the same military idea.

Pleasures : Tourneys.

When not actually fighting, the nobles indulged in sports which were a direct preparation for war. The greatest of these was the tourney or tournament. According to English contemporaries, it was of French origin, and the French excelled in it. The early tourneys were mimic battles hardly less dangerous than actual combat. At Lagny-sur-Marne three thousand knights of different countries met in the open plain. The Anglo-Norman poem of William the Marshal describes with great gusto these festive encounters.

The Church condemned them, as she condemned in principle all forms of useless violence. But in this, as in so many other instances, her idealism was defeated. Pope Innocent III, autocratic though he was, had to lift the ban, and let the nobles have their fun, provided they were not remiss in their Church contributions. Later the tourneys became mere occasions for the display of wealth and skill; they lost their terrible realism when the political prestige of the dominant class ceased to be based on individual prowess. As a preparation for tourneys or war, the knight would practise tilting at the quintain (a revolving post) or else joust and fence with some companion.

Hunting.

Next to tourneys came hunting—again the image of war. There were still immense woodlands in France, like the vast forests of Ardennes, so dear to romance, haunted by brigands, lovers, and wild beasts. Bear-hunting, then a favourite pastime, and falconry are now things of the past; but wolf, stag, and boar-hunting have remained noble sports to this day. There was a practical side to these expeditions: the barons despised butcher's meat, and the everlasting hog's flesh with which the poor had to be satisfied; they were very fond of venison, highly seasoned and washed down with spiced wine.

The Fifteen Joys of Feudal Life.

The knight was at his best out of doors. Within walls, time must have hung heavy on his hands. In the eleventh century rough were the comforts of his home, which was essentially a guard-house, with reeds for carpets and torches for light. M. Seignobos has catalogued with quaint precision the fifteen joys of the feudal life, according to a great admirer of the Middle Ages, Léon Gautier: (1) hunting, (2) fishing, (3) fencing, (4) tilting, (5) playing chess, (6) eating and drinking, (7) listening to minstrels, (8) watching bear-fights, (9) entertaining his friends, (10) talking with ladies, (11) holding his court of justice, (12) walking in the meadows, (13) being cupped and bled, (14) warming himself by the fire, (15) watching the snow fall.

And a few others.

After all the programme is not so bad, and M. Léon Gautier unaccountably omits at least one important item: attending church services; for the lord had a chapel in his bailey and a chaplain among his retainers. Yet all these attractions were not sufficient to keep at home those plethoric and roving natures. Many were the occasions for trips and journeys; the noble had to visit his friends or repair to the court of his suzerain; for lack of a good expedition, he would go on a pilgrimage. In spite of the hardships and insecurity of travelling, the French were not so invincibly reluctant to leave their fireside in the twelfth century as they were in the nineteenth; monks, merchants, minstrels, and even journeymen were constantly on the road: the barons were filled with the same restless spirit.

Financial Difficulties.

Some of the pleasures enumerated above were inexpensive enough. But on the whole, the noble life was one of extravagance. The ceremonies of knighthood and the tournaments in particular were great sources of expense. It was hard to make both ends meet, and the lords were driven to exaction and pillage. But these resources were not unlimited—your tenants or serfs would soon be squeezed dry, and if you went out to plunder some neighbouring estate, yours might be plundered in its turn. Thus the lords were driven to borrowing on all hands—from the Church, from the Lombards, even from the Jews. Sometimes they borrowed for a worthy purpose, as when they set out for the crusade; sometimes their troubles had interesting social results, as when they were compelled, for a consideration, to enfranchize their serfs or to sell a charter to a commune. Financial chaos was a permanent and universal evil in the Middle Ages. Except the regular Church—and even this exception would not apply to all the monasteries—no one seems to have had any proper sense of economy. Most of the kings, of the nobles, of the chapters, and of the communes were ever in financial straits. The Count of Champagne, for whom the great fairs of his province were a gold mine, was none the less sorely pressed for money, and some of the noblest estates were often in pawn.

§ 5. Culture of the Fighting Caste.

Chronicle: Villehardouin.

These rough fighters left to clerics and minstrels the care of chronicling their deeds. As might be expected, we have hardly any document, until late in the thirteenth century, in which the feudal class stands self-revealed. The one prominent exception is a masterpiece: the story of the crusade against Constantinople, dictated by Geoffrey of Villehardouin in his old age. Geoffrey, Marshal of Champagne, had taken a conspicuous part in the events he related. It was he who negotiated with the Venitians for the transportation of the army. For reasons best known to himself, he acquiesced in the paradoxical change of plan which hurled a crusading host against the Christian capital of the East. His work is of appealing directness and simplicity. But the naïveté with which we credit him is an illusion due to our lack of familiarity with his style; there is shrewdness and the reticence of a statesman in his apparently artless narrative. With his soldierly bluntness, he has noted a few impressions which, after seven centuries, have lost none of their vividness. The sailing of the Latin argosy, the awe and admiration felt by the crusaders when they first caught sight of Constantinople, are scenes full of colour and grandeur. The long and glorious history of French prose could not open under more favourable auspices.

The Chanson de Geste: its Origins.

The best mirror we have of the feudal class is the epic, appropriately called the Song of Deeds, la Chanson de Geste. The origin of this sturdy branch of French literature is uncertain. Most historians follow Gaston Paris and Léon Gautier, for whom the Geste is essentially a product of the Teutonic spirit: only the form is Romance. True it is that the chief centre of epic production was that part of France which had been more thoroughly germanized than the rest; the hypothesis of a southern epic anterior to the northern has been abandoned. True again that the barbaric joy in bloodshed and conflagration found in these poems reminds us of the Berserker *Wuth*, in which the Germanic race has long taken such pride. We also know that the Franks had their sagas—the story of Meroveus, for instance, is half-mythical. Charlemagne had these folk-songs collected, and that grand old Teuton himself became the dominant figure of the mediæval cycle.

The blend of Teutonic and Latin influences is the cardinal fact in French history, and what is true of the race itself may well be true of the epic. But in most cases it is singularly difficult to dissociate the two factors. Of any filiation between the Frankish Sagas and the French Chansons no definite proof has been adduced. Charlemagne's efforts to preserve the ancient Teutonic battle-songs are sufficient evidence that their vitality was menaced; and, as a matter of fact, they have perished utterly. The spirit of the French epic is primitive rather than specifically Teutonic; it could be ascribed to a people who, like the Gallo-Romans, had relapsed into barbarism, just as well as to a people who, like the Franks, had not yet fully emerged from it. We have no definite monument of the epic until after the fusion of the races had been effected; no clear traces of early Teutonic mythology or institutions can be detected in these poems. Their inspiration is feudal first of all, Christian to no small degree, and, in so far as it is national at all, it is surprisingly French. Charlemagne is represented as a rule as the Emperor of Western Christendom, frequently also as the King of France, never as a Frankish chieftain. The poets speak with unexpected tenderness of "douce France": a term of the utmost vagueness in political geography, France was already a living reality in the hearts of men. Whatever may have been the case with the lost—and largely hypothetical—epics of the Merovingian and Carolingian periods, the existing Chanson de Geste, like the Gothic cathedral, is neither Latin nor German: it is French.

§ 6. The Christian and Feudal Epic.

Roland.

Of these Chansons, the best known and the best, as well as one of the earliest extant, is the Song of Roland. The historical foundation for it was slender. In 778, as the army of Charles was returning from an expedition against the Saracens of Spain, its rear-guard was attacked and cut down by bands of Basque mountaineers. In this obscure combat perished, among other captains, Roland, Count of the Breton Border. Very little beside the name of the hero and of the defile where he fell survived in the tradition of North-Western France. Then came the universal reawakening of conscious energy in the eleventh century; and with it welled up founts of epic inspiration—the aggressive faith, the love of adventure which culminated in the first crusade. We are told that Taillefer, the fighting minstrel, sang "of Charlemagne and of Roland" at the battle of Hastings. The Roland we still possess was probably written a decade or so later.

In the hands of a genuine poet the meagre and vague story of Roland's defeat assumed definiteness and grandeur. Charlemagne is no mere earthly king, but the Christian Emperor of fabulous eld, vigour, and holiness. Roland is the Emperor's own nephew, and the paragon of knightly valour. The local disaster became the central episode in a tremendous battle between the forces of Christ and Mahom. And, enlarging still his theme by a bold pastiche of the Gospel story, the poet shows us Nature herself, shaken by portents, "in great mourning for the death of Roland."

Christians and Paynim fall by the thousand: but in this tale of bloodshed there is no hint of idle cruelty. Rather do we remember the gentleness and restraint—the heroic friendship between Roland and Oliver; nor can we forget Aude, who was to be Roland's bride, and who passes away, proud and sweet, at the news of his death. The poet has grasped the essence of tragedy: neither blind fate nor treason are sufficient to compass Roland's downfall, but a flaw in his character, or rather the excess of his chief virtue: it is Roland's punctilious and stubborn pride which prevents him from calling for assistance in time. And the story of mighty deeds is pervaded with a Christian spirit, just as Durandal, Roland's beloved sword, is made holy by the relics its hilt encloses. It is to the angel of God that the dying hero gives his glove in supreme homage; and Gabriel appears at the last moment to the weary Emperor, urging him to further service: Gesta Dei per Francos!

There is little literary charm about the Roland. In its four thousand lines we come across a single poetical image; the style is direct, adequate, but even-toned and undistinguished. M. Léon Gautier, recanting his youthful heresies, had to confess that the Song of Roland was no Iliad. But the fighting caste it depicts, plain, vigorous, austere, commands our respectful interest.

William of Orange.

Charlemagne was not the only centre of the primitive epic. In 793, William, Count of Toulouse, fought the Saracens at Villedaigne, on the river Orbieu, in Southern France. Although defeated, he succeeded in checking the progress of the invaders. He retired in 806 to a monastery which he had founded, died there in 812, and was revered as a saint. Under many names [1] this William and his family became the heroes of a whole cycle, the most complete in French literature.

Feudal Wars.

Unfortunately, this crusading and national spirit was not the permanent mood of the mediæval knight. We find many poems filled with the struggle of the feudal lords against their king. Of these, Renaud of Montauban (*The Four Sons of Aymon*) and *Girart of Roussillon* are the best remembered. More expressive still of feudal chaos and royal impotence are the poems reciting the interminable war of the barons among themselves, in which the figure of the King is totally obliterated. In the five songs which make up the huge *Geste of the Lorrainers*, the savagery of the fighting caste, its rough loyalty, punctiliously formal and not incompatible with basest treachery, its primitive pleasures and its constant perils, the crude fetishism that went by the name of Christianity, are mirrored with dispassionate clearness.

The folk-epic is based on traditions, implicitly accepted. But the poems which have reached us had already passed into the stage of conscious artistry. Even in the Roland, fictitious elements had been freely introduced. The Orient worked its potent charm on the later Chansons. *Huon of Bordeaux* may have had a foundation in Carolingian history: but the poet's path was crossed by the green dwarf Oberon, who led him into the realm of Faery. Thus the sober feudal epic merged with the romance of chivalry.

§ 7. DEFORMATION OF THE EPIC.

There is not a smile in the Roland. But mediæval lords, being men, and Frenchmen, could not stand the strain of continuous heroism, any more than even the clerics could bear the unalloyed spirituality of interminable Church ceremonies. So the natural man reasserted himself: comic incidents and characters were introduced. In *Aliscamps*, the *Battle of Loquifer*, and *Monk Rainouart* we find a giant, formidable and ludicrous, the butt of scullions and the terror of Saracens, who is the caricature and counterpart of his kinsman William, the hero of Villedaigne.

---

[1] Particularly as William of Orange.

It must be borne in mind that the nobility soon ceased to provide the only audience for the Chansons de Geste: minstrels would sing them at the fairs as well as in the castles. A crowd of tradesmen and peasants would soon grow impatient of eternal swordsplay. So we can trace a curious shading off from the spirit of Christian militancy to the spirit of farce and satire; etymology bears witness to the change: the noble Geste became the merry Jest; the stiff grandeur of *Roland* led to the scatological parody of *Audigier*.

The Pilgrimage of Charlemagne.

One of these irreverent compositions, strangely enough, is as old as the Roland, if not older. The Abbey of Saint Denys was famed for the possession of great relics of the Passion; the yearly exhibition of these relics attracted vast crowds of pilgrims. With the pilgrimage was coupled a fair, "l'Endit."[1] In this atmosphere of religion, business, and merry-making grew the puzzling medley called *Charlemagne's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem.* The object of the poem is to tell how the relics came to Saint Denys; the hero is the holy Emperor himself; nothing could be more edifying. But the treatment is disconcerting. Charles was strutting in his court, very well pleased with himself. His wife laughed at his vanity: she knew a handsomer man. And who may he be? The Emperor of Constantinople. Very well, Charles and his peers will repair to the Bosphorus, challenging comparison; and woe to the unsympathetic wife if she has spoken too rashly! The French proceed to Jerusalem, where they secure the miracle-working relics; thence to Constantinople, where they are well received by the Emperor Hugon. Left alone, they while away the evening hours by swapping the most colossal "gabs" or boasts. These hardly bear translation except in poilu slang, for their humour is that of the barrack-room and the pot-house. The Greek Emperor has spied upon the peers; and he challenges them to make good their impossible claims. But God loves the French, and can take a joke: He sends His angels to the assistance of the embarrassed visitors; and they perform the miracles they had so rashly jested about.[1]

---

[1] *Indictum*; modern le Lendit, or even le Landy.

How are we to account for this humorous tale in epic garb? Even at present, it is true, the greatest saints in the calendar, and particularly the Prince of the Apostles, are treated with smiling familiarity by very orthodox persons—the children of the house enjoy privileges which could not be tolerated if strangers were to assume them. Then, in the mighty stream of faith, why should there not have been many minor currents of half-belief and unbelief? Isolated as was the fighting caste in its castles and in its pride, its culture was not self-supporting, and could not be wholly separated from that of the mass of the people. The early minstrels may have been men-at-arms, like Taillefer, singing as he rode to battle: but most of them were poor clerics, bohemians, déclassés, with the strain of daring and irreverence that may be expected of such gentry. May they not have introduced into the feudal epic those satirical touches of which the slow-witted warriors did not fully comprehend the purport? And may there not have been other lords subtle enough to enjoy a thrust against their own caste or faith? "Mediæval naïveté" is a convenient explanation, but we have ceased to believe in its universal efficacy.

Popularity of the French Epic.

The early French epic enjoyed immediate, universal, and prolonged popularity. Through the medium of the French language, Charlemagne and Roland, in the twelfth century, conquered the Christian West again. We find German, Dutch, Scandinavian, Italian, and Spanish versions of the Chansons de Geste. In France proper the epic survived long, but in ever worse garbled form. Changed from assonance to rhyme, and then from rhyme to prose, and twice vulgarized in the process; forced into artificial cycles by the addition of worthless introductions, links, and sequels; contaminated by the spurious chivalry of the later romances, it lost the severe, steel-clad simplicity which makes the Roland so precious in our eyes. In the seventeenth century the debased versions of the old poems were included in a

---

[1] Léon Gautier, *Les Epopées Françaises III.*

"Blue Library," which preserved its favour in the countryside for a hundred and fifty years. Romanticism did justice, and more than justice, to the mediæval epic: Victor Hugo modernized superbly some of its best episodes. Excessive enthusiasm has died in its turn. Except the Roland, no *chanson de geste* has secured a permanent place among the national classics. But nowhere else could we find such a minute and vivid picture of the feudal fighting caste.

Note I. Form of the Epic.

Most of the Chansons are in decasyllabic verse (Charlemagne's Pilgrimage is in Alexandrine, or twelve-syllable verse), and divided into stanzas or *laisses* of varying length—fifteen to twenty lines in Roland; but there are examples of laisses containing 500 and even 1,100 lines. All the lines in the same laisse end in the same assonance, an incomplete rhyme in which the last vowel sound alone is considered. For example, "fols, oz, colps, corn, mort," have in common an assonance in "o"; "fort, port, mort" are rhymes.

Note II. Epics on Classical Subjects.

Classical stories and legends were retold in the prevailing form of the Chanson de Geste; the companions of Achilles and Alexander became mediæval knights. These Romances of Antiquity show a blend of the feudal fighting spirit and of reviving scholarship. The most famous of them are the *Romance of Thebes* (*c.* 1150), the *Romance of Troy*, by Benoit of Sainte-Maure (*c.* 1160), the *Romance of Eneas* (*c.* 1175), *Alexander* (*c.* 1180). They are, however, more closely akin to the Romances of Chivalry than to the Chansons de Geste properly so called.

THE AMERICA PRESS
LIBRARY

CHAPTER III

THE ROMANCE OF CHIVALRY

§ 1. Woman in Feudal Society.

A rough fighting caste: such were the lords of the Early Middle Ages, and such many of them remained until a much later date. There is, however, another aspect of feudal society which, much as it has been over-emphasized, is none the less real and important. Prowess was not complete without courtesy; knighthood had for its correlative chivalry.

About the twelfth century woman was gradually emerging from the semi-domesticity of Frankish times, and reconquering the highly respected position of the Roman matron. She could inherit and hold a fief, and she used the rights thus conferred with truly virile energy. The great lady of the time could be the fit mate of her lord. She was no longer reduced to eternal spinning and singing: she went out hunting, ventured on distant pilgrimages, waged war, or even followed a crusade. Blanche of Navarre, Countess of Champagne, defeated her competitor in a pitched battle which she directed in person; Blanche of Castile, mother of Saint Louis, ruled the land with firmness, and put down rebellion.[1]

Yet woman was still in a subordinate position. The duty of reverence enjoined upon the knights was but imperfectly observed. Henry II Plantagenet treated Queen Alienor, and Philip-Augustus Queen Ingeburg of Denmark, with extraordinary brutality, and we have evidence in chronicles and literature that such an exalted example was followed among their vassals. This is another case of the discrepancy between ideal and reality in that violently contrasted civilization. Even at its best chivalry was based on the assumption that woman was weak and had to be protected. In an age when fist law prevailed, the defenceless must needs be the will-less. The noble maiden had no voice in the selection of a husband. She was a pawn in the feudal game, an appurtenance to the fief. Her father, and also her suzerain, could dispose of her hand before she was even able to form a choice. A mere child could be affianced for financial or political reasons. As each barony was a miniature state, State marriages, such as they are still practised in reigning families, were then the rule.

---

[1] The best example of that energetic type in literature is Guibourc, the wife of Count William in *Aliscamps*.

These marriages of convenience, so far as we can judge, did not invariably lead to mutual affection—indeed the time would soon come when in refined circles love and marriage were held to be incompatible; but neither did they breed unfaithfulness. In the epic the feudal wife is loyal to her lord. M. Luchaire suggests that the minstrels had no thought but of flattering their noble patrons, and that they may not have told the whole truth. Yet they very frankly depict the roughness of the barons, not only with their dependents, but with their wives. The negative testimony of literature proves at least that the subject of adultery did not appeal to the aristocracy in the eleventh century and in the first part of the twelfth: this in itself is valuable evidence, when we consider the tone of the later Arthurian romances, and especially the partiality of the *bourgeois* for broad stories. But if the feudal union was, as a rule, loyally respected as long as it lasted, it could be dissolved with surprising facility. We might expect divorce to be rigorously impossible in such a thoroughly Christian age: so it was, in doctrine, but not in practice. The stringent rules prohibiting the marriage of even distant relatives provided a loophole. There was hardly a union that could not be "annulled" for canonical reasons, if the applicant were powerful enough. Hence the amazing fact that we find frequent instances of ladies marrying three and four times. As the divorced husband kept the feudal titles of his wife, there arose constant and inextricable legal conflicts, highly characteristic of a time which had a genius for confusion. Just as the personal loyalty of man to man came to be subordinated to the traditional relation between land and land, marriage also was altered and spoilt by the same considerations: the land tyrannized over the family. Even M. Léon Gautier confesses that feudalism had the most deplorable influence upon marriage and family ties.[1] It is plain that the theory according to which reverence for woman is of Teutonic and Christian origin is a Romantic delusion. It was not until seven hundred years after the German invasions that chivalry began to develop in the West. The Church no doubt worshipped the Virgin, and granted women honourable rank as prioress or abbess. But all clerical literature is savagely hostile to woman, in whom it affects to see a creature of a lower order, the incarnation of dangerous instincts, the accomplice of the Tempter, ever responsible for the Fall, the Gateway of Satan—*Janua Diaboli.* It was in the south, the least teutonized and perhaps the least Christian part of France, that the somewhat artificial cult for woman had its origin; it was from the Celtic West that the greatest romances of love arose.

§ 2. SOUTHERN ORIGIN OF COURTLY LOVE.

Between the First Crusade and the crusade against the Albigensians, Aquitaine and Languedoc were again, as in Roman times, the most brilliantly cultured part of the country. The poets or troubadours, masters of the "gay science," sang of war and love, blending sentiment and sensuality with a lightness of touch which had no equivalent in the north. The earliest of them was no less a personage than William IX, Duke of Aquitaine, a master of cavalier wit—which comes as a surprise in a crusader. Among others were Geoffrey Rudel, of Blaye, who fell in love. on her reputation, with the Far-Away Princess, sailed for her realm, and died when reaching port. Out of the five hundred troubadours whose names have reached us, half at least belong to the aristocracy. Bertran of Born was a nobleman, Bernard of Ventadour a commoner. The southern dialect they mostly used was that of Limoges: curiously enough, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "Limousin" became a byword for an uncouth patois.

These troubadours sang at the Courts of Toulouse, Montpellier, Narbonne. There it was that the ideal of "courtly love" arose. This subtle sentiment was held to be incompatible with marriage, which remained a matter-of-fact transaction. The knightly poet and his Platonic love pledged their troth to each other by means of a ring and a kiss. Sometimes a priest gave his blessing, if not his consecration, to these mystic unions. From such subtle relationships there arose a number of delicate points, which were debated and adjudged in poems of sentimental casuistry; these, interpreted too literally, gave rise to the legend of the "Courts of Love." It must be remembered that at the same moment the whole south was deeply stirred by heresies of Oriental origin, which preached an exalted purity, and were accused of favouring libertinism. In spite of the acknowledged "brilliancy" of this civilization, it may well be doubted whether, if unchecked, it would have enjoyed a very healthy development.

---

[1] According to contemporary moralists, these ladies were full of faults. They wasted their time playing chess or dice. They were fond of dress, and extravagant; they wore false hair and used paint. But the ever-recurring accusation, the unpardonable sin, was that they wore exceedingly long trains, "those inventions of the Devil." Fashions vary, but moralists are never pleased.

This new "courtesy" spread to the north, very sporadically. In the early thirteenth century, whilst most of the barons are still uncouth, we find refined ladies presiding over a widening circle. Alienor of Aquitaine, who was in turns Queen of France and of England, had brought with her the manners of her province. The Countesses of Champagne had a civilizing influence, even Blanche of Navarre, who was so well able to fight for her own rights. Northern lords, like Conon of Béthune and Thibaut of Champagne, began inditing lyrics. Although the epic of feudal war, and the epic on Greco-Roman subjects, were still holding their ground, the chief favour was passing to romances of fantastic adventure and courtly love. Many of these were of Byzantine origin; but the best belonged to the Breton cycle.

§ 3. THE BRETON CYCLE.

The Celts, in the west of Great Britain and in Brittany, were still cherishing the memory and hoping for the return of their national hero, Arthur. These half-mythical traditions, in the haze of Celtic romanticism, became blended with other tales—the legend of Tristan, Prince of Leonois, a Breton Theseus, and that of Myrddhin (Merlin), a sorcerer and prophet of the Welsh. How these Breton folk-motives passed into French is still a problem. Two main channels may be indicated. About 1135 an Anglo-Norman cleric, Geoffrey of Monmouth, composed in Latin a History of the British Kings. This was one of those audacious pseudo-historical medleys which the gullibility of the time accepted as sober fact. The works of Geoffrey were not the direct sources of the romances; but they contributed to the popularity of Breton subjects, and lent them a courtly tone hitherto lacking. They were repeatedly translated into French verse: it is in Wace's version, *Brut*, that we find the first mention of the Arthurian Table Round.

The Lays. Marie of France.

The Celts were noted for the number and excellence of their bards. These poets sang their brief lays to the accompaniment of a small harp or rote. They seem to have been in great demand at the courts of the French nobility on both sides of the Channel. We do not possess these lays in their primitive form: but a score of them have survived, translated, or rather adapted, into French. Most of these were composed by a Frenchwoman established in England, Marie of France. Their Celtic origin is manifest: we find in them episodes from the lives of Tristan and of the Arthurian knights, and we can discern in their misty background traces of a forgotten mythology. But the easy style, the delicate psychology, the refined conception of love, are feminine and French. The finest of these lays is *Eliduc.*

Eliduc.

Eliduc is a Breton knight who has lost the favour of his sovereign. Leaving his wife behind, he sails for England in the hope of retrieving his fortune. He is only too successful: a king's daughter falls in love with him. Eliduc fails to confess that he is married, and he returns her passion. When she discovers that he is not a free man, she drops dead. Eliduc's wife, with a magic flower, resuscitates her rival, and makes room for her by entering a convent. But the lover's conscience is not at peace: the second wife joins the first, who welcomes her like a sister. And such is the author's skill that we do not despise Eliduc: doubly false, yet loving and loyal, he is the toy of blind forces. Before the tragic caprices of fate and love, all is vain but resignation and pity. We are by no means certain that this conception is of Celtic origin; at any rate, it is foreign to the primitive French epic and to the lighter spirit of southern courtship. It found its finest expression in the Tristan legend.

Tristan.

Tristan was returning from Ireland to Cornwall, bringing home Iseut the Fair, the bride-to-be of his uncle, King Mark. Iseut's mother had prepared a magic potion for the future husband and wife: a wise precaution, as King Mark was afflicted with horse's ears. By mistake it is Tristan who drinks the love philtre with Iseut: and now the two are bound by irresistible passion. They land; Iseut and Mark are married; but her guilty love is unabated. Tristan and Iseut have enemies at Court; King Mark is suspicious; many times they are on the verge of detection, but escape through luck or deceit. Finally they stand condemned; Tristan lives as an outlaw in the forest, and the Queen joins him. The efficacy of the spell (in certain versions of the story) was limited in time; Tristan and Iseut come to themselves; she returns to King Mark; Tristan goes away and marries another Iseut, Iseut with the White Hands. But although the magic be passed, the lovers' souls are still yearning for each other. Tristan, sick unto death, sends secretly for Iseut his only love: if his messenger brings her back, let his sail be white; black if he returns alone. The first Iseut obeys the summons unhesitatingly; but wind and tide delay her progress. When her ship heaves in view, Tristan is dying—too weak to watch the horizon with his own eyes. His wife, she of the White Hands, has overheard his instructions. "A sail! she cries.—Black or white?—Black." And Tristan dies. The first Iseut lands at last, rushes to her lover, and falls dead by his side.[1]

---

[1] Of this famous theme, the best known versions, those of the Anglo-Norman Beroul (c. 1150) and Thomas (c. 1170), are incomplete; the one by Chrétien of Troyes is lost. But several translations, particularly into German, and a long prose reworking, enable us to fill the gaps. M. Joseph Bédier has woven those fragments into a continuous text: a delicate task accomplished with consummate scholarship and marvellous poetic skill. There is no book so true to the spirit of the Middle Ages and at the same time so fascinating for the modern reader as Bédier's *Tristan*. Wagner, of course, has handled the theme with the complete freedom of a master.

§ 4. THE ARTHURIAN LEGENDS.

Tristan was annexed rather late and by devious ways to the Arthurian cycle. Of the Table Round stories, many are machine-made and uninteresting enough; others still possess a shallow romantic charm; two at least are among the great themes in the world's literature. The first of these is the guilty love between Lancelot, the bravest knight in Arthur's court, and Queen Guinevere; the second is the Quest of the Holy Grail. They have inspired masterpieces in all European languages: but it was through the medium of French that they reached their universality. There is hardly any better instance of France's essential rôle as the clearing-house of Western culture. This glorious part, however, has its drawback: universality may be attained at the expense of depth and originality; some of the inherent weaknesses of the French mind are exhibited in the best known writer of Breton romances, Chrétien of Troyes.

Chrétien of Troyes.

Chrétien was admired throughout Europe as few poets have been: yet he was no genius, but the "average sensual man," with a talent for polite literature. His lucid, alert, amiable octosyllabic couplets strain off passion and mysticism as efficiently as Voltaire's prose. The subject and spirit of his *Knight in the Cart* (Launcelot of the Lake) were suggested to him by Countess Marie of Champagne.

Launcelot.

The depths of the Launcelot theme, the conflict between loyalty to the perfect king and invincible love for his queen, are left unplumbed. We find instead the narrative skill of a consummate craftsman—somewhat verbose, it must be confessed: but the mediæval public never thought it could have too much of a good thing. The identity of the hero remains a mystery until the moment when its revelation will come most effectively. Palaces, entertainments, costumes, arms, and jewellery are described with the gusto of the born society reporter. But the chief interest lies in the "laws of courtly love," as elaborated in Southern France and transplanted to the court of Champagne. These are minutely set forth, and the poem is less a tale of wild passion than a code of *savoir-vivre.* The whole duty of the perfect knight is to be a puppet in the hands of his lady love, who, by the way, should not be his lawful wife. For her sake he will conquer giants ; but, if such be her whim, he will allow himself to be ignominiously defeated, and will rejoice in his abasement.

The Holy Grail.

It is a paradox that one of the great mystic themes of all times should have entered literature through such an elegant and shallow court versifier as Chrétien. He began a poem on *Perceval* (Parsival) *of Wales.* Perceval, brought up in ignorance of the knightly profession, suddenly discovers himself, and approves himself a valiant man-at-arms. His adventurous course takes him to the castle of a sick "Fisher King" ; a grail or vase passes before his eyes. Who was this King, what ailed him, and what was that Grail? Such are the questions which Perceval should have asked, and which he foolishly refrained from asking. His ill-timed discretion will have the direst consequences. We do not know the answer to these riddles : we are not certain that Chrétien himself knew ; at any rate, he did not live to complete his Perceval.[1] Neither did the first, nor even the second, of the poets who attempted to continue his work ; a curse seemed to be upon it. Finally the Grail came to be assimilated with a relic which had nothing to do with the Breton cycle—the chalice of the Last Supper, the cup in which Joseph of Arimathea had, according to tradition, received the blood of Our Lord. Early in the thirteenth century, a poet of Franche-Comté, Robert of Boron, boldly linked together the two sets of legends in his trilogy : *Joseph of Arimathea, Merlin, Perceval.*

In some of the versions Perceval himself retrieves his error, and conquers the Grail. In others this supreme reward is not for him ; nor for gallant Gawain, or Launcelot, for they are too worldly : it goes to the son of Launcelot, Sir Galahad, the knight of perfect purity. Thus the courtly epic transcends itself: faith and chastity are finally placed above human love.

---

[1] Chrétien wrote *c.* 1160–75.

> "Nay, said the knight; for no such passion mine.
> But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail
> Drove me from all vainglories, rivalries,
> And earthly heats that spring and sparkle out
> Among us in the jousts, while women watch
> Who wins, who falls; and waste the spiritual strength
> Within us, better offer'd up to Heaven."

Unfortunately, in the French versions, and, we are bound to say, in the greatest of the German versions as well, the taint of artificiality is upon the Grail story. Its mixture of exalted faith and unexplained magic is sheer romanticism; its mysticism is at the bottom a mystification. East and west, north and south, unite in the Perceval: the Oriental tradition of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion; the Breton legends of Arthur and Merlin, and, possibly, the folk-lore story of the mystic, life-giving vessel; the Teutonic ideal of prowess; the Provençal ideal of chivalry. But these heterogeneous elements were not fused at the proper time in the crucible of faith or genius; the result is composite, interesting, and unconvincing; not a synthesis of European culture, but a masterpiece of make-believe, a product of refined decadence.

§ 5. ARISTOCRATIC LITERATURE.

By the side of the Byzantine and Breton romances, other poems on knightly subjects and adventures of contemporary life filled the place of our present-day novels, and offered very much the same merits.[1] The most delightful of these light pieces of fiction is the *Chantefable of Aucassin and Nicolette*, a medley of prose and song, of wild adventure and pretty sentiment, as fresh after seven centuries as the miraculous miniatures of some missal.[2] In the fifteenth century Antoine de la Salle set forth again the gospel of chivalrous love in his "*Petit Jehan de Saintré.*" But alack! hardly is the young knight's education complete when his ideal is shattered: his lady proves coarsely false, and the high romance ends like a cynical fabliau.

---

[1] Cf. Ch. V. Langlois, *La Société Française au Moyen Age d'après dix Romans d'Aventure*; particularly *Flamenca.*

[2] End of the twelfth century.

Romance of the Rose.

Already in Chrétien of Troyes the allegorizing tendency was clearly discernible. We have already noted that, in the mediæval mind, things were not what they seemed. Even stones and animals were symbols rather than plain facts; ancient history and the Old Testament were but the prophetic figures of the Christian dispensation; and the prevailing philosophy held phenomena to be but the passing shadows of universal ideas. It was inevitable that the courtly code also should assume allegorical form. This was effected by Guillaume of Lorris, in his *Romance of the Rose* (*c.* 1237). There we find the whole casuistry of love in the framework of a symbolical dream, full of gracefully pedantic conceits. The Romance of the Rose was one of the most popular among mediæval poems. But once more, as in "The Pilgrimage of Charlemagne," as in "Le Petit Jehan de Saintré," the inner disharmony of that puzzling age manifested itself: forty years after Guillaume of Lorris, Jehan of Meun gave this pretty, aristocratic Art of Love a tremendous sequel, which, as we shall see, is a vigorous cyclopædia of the bourgeois spirit.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had many aristocratic poets: at least poets who, if not all of noble birth, were attached in some honourable capacity to great lords and ladies. They were prolific; they were great masters of technique; but in the history of culture their importance is slight. Who cares for Guillaume of Machault (*c.* 1300–*c.* 1370), in spite of his curious and somewhat unwholesome love romance, *Voir Dit* (A True Story)? Yet his fame was immense in his lifetime. Eustache Deschamps, Christine de Pisan, Froissart, will be mentioned in other connections. Alain Chartier (*c.* 1390–*c.* 1440) was so much admired that Margaret of Scotland, the Dauphin's bride, bent over the sleeping poet—one of the ugliest men in his generation—and kissed his "eloquent lips."

Charles of Orleans.

At the extreme end of the period (1391–1465) we find the most exalted in rank and the most exquisite of these rhymesters, Charles, Duke of Orleans. Few men have gone through such tragic experiences: his father was murdered, his mother died of impotent grief, his wife left him a widower

16

at eighteen, and he was kept in rigorous captivity by the English kings for twenty-five years. Yet out of this sombre life came forth warbling notes and the airiest trifling of cavalier fancy. Perhaps the very habit of suffering had crushed in him the capacity for profound sorrow. He is best remembered for rondels of consummate grace :

> " Le temps a laissié son manteau
> De vent, de froidure et de pluye . . . "

In another branch of literature aristocratic influence can be traced. Among the many monastic chronicles and histories we find a few written by noble laymen ; and these are by far the most valuable, because they are the most personal and the most human. We have already mentioned the story of the crusade against Constantinople, by Geoffrey of Villehardouin.

Joinville.

The Life of Louis IX, by his friend Joinville, Seneschal of Champagne, is charming in subject and style, in spite of its undeniable garrulity : like the Memoirs of Villehardouin, this book was a child of old age. There is a pleasing contrast between the saintly and gentle King and his petulant, naïvely worldly companion. Never has reverence been so perfectly blended with familiarity, nor holiness made so lifelike and unpedantic.

Froissart.

Froissart, who saw the first half of the Hundred Years' War, is a native of the Low Countries, who cares little for France or England as nations, more for his princely protectors, and most of all for the feats of arms and prowess, for the gorgeous setting of waning chivalry. He had written lyrics and romances : no wonder that he described with the gusto of a romanticist the tourneys and adventures he had seen or heard of in the course of a varied career. He is a conscientious investigator withal, and a faithful witness. With Commynes, we get away from the spirit of feudal chronicle, and we enter—with uncertain step, however—upon statecraft and history.[1]

---

[1] Cf. p. 300.

§ 6. Aristocratic Life: The Castles at the End of the Middle Ages.

Thus had some at least of the nobles become more refined, fonder of the amenities of life. Their castles bore evidence to that change. The rude fortress had become a palace. Outwardly it was still formidable enough, although in the upper storeys the walls were now pierced with mullioned windows. But the buildings in the inner court were rich and delicate, like the churches and town halls of the same period, and the rooms were decorated with taste and magnificence. Carved oak, embossed leather, tapestries, and silver plate had taken the place of the rough-hewn furniture, coarse matting, and rude table-ware of earlier feudal life. The Louvre was altered in that spirit—the second at least and by no means the last transformation of that Protean edifice. King Charles the Wise preferred the Hostel Saint-Paul, which was less of a fort and more of a pleasaunce: a vast aggregation of mansions and gardens. Louis of Orleans built Pierrefonds, which, under Napoleon III, was restored by Viollet-le-Duc: outside a dream castle, rising in the deep forest, with its tall towers mirrored in a placid pool; inside a palace, full of stately halls and picturesque nooks, a masterpiece of grace and ingenuity. The Renaissance, which was the golden age of French châteaux, owes much of its charm to the survival of many Gothic elements. It may be noted that the interior appointments of the late mediæval castles were more satisfactory than those of the classical palaces: perhaps because, in the fifteenth century, a prolonged siege was not altogether out of the question. Sanitation, for one thing, was attended to, whereas at Versailles, where everything is sacrificed to symmetry and effect, it was totally overlooked.[1]

Princely Patrons of Art.

The fifteenth century, that tragic period of trial and poverty, was also the time of the princely patrons of art. The Renaissance spirit was blowing fitfully, in faint premonitory gusts, over a country ruined by four generations of war. We have just mentioned Louis of Orleans; but John, Duke of Berry (1340–1416) was even more of a builder and collector. His castles, his gems and jewels, his tapestries, were famous; but most precious of all to-day are his manuscripts, enriched with priceless miniatures. In these we see the ideal of courtly life at the close of the Middle Ages —hunts and pageants, castles as airy and ornate as churches, fair orchards and lawns, trains of lords in fur-lined garments and ladies with long pointed headgear. Good King René, Duke of Anjou and Lorraine, Count of Provence, and King, *in partibus*, of Jerusalem, preserved the ancient fame of Angers as a centre of culture—a fame which that charming city still deserves.[1] Most magnificent of all were the Dukes of Burgundy, who controlled the richest parts of Central and North-Eastern France, and dreamed of becoming independent as Grand Dukes of the West or Kings of Austrasia. Dijon in particular was filled with works of art, of Flemish-Burgundian inspiration, full of rich life and somewhat coarse power.[2]

---

[1] Viollet-le-Duc claims that some of the underground dungeons or oubliettes about which such horrific tales are told were nought but useful and unromantic cesspools. In the same spirit he would have us believe that certain torture-chambers were monumental kitchens. It is infinitely probable that the Ann Ratcliffe school of romance has added many lurid touches to our conception of the mediæval castle.

Once supreme in bodily prowess, the aristocracy had now become supreme in artistic taste as well: the fighting caste had turned into a class of wealthy connoisseurs. So far the gain was clear. But they did not possess the same superiority in virtue or service. They had been for centuries an element of disorder: they were destined to become an ornamental deadweight.

---

[1] Among the princely art patrons in France we should mention the Popes, who for two centuries enriched their city and palace of Avignon.

[2] Cf. particularly the works of Claus Sluter.

CHAPTER IV

THE PEASANTS

§ 1. CONDITION OF THE SERFS.

AT the beginning of the Capetian era the free man tilling his own field had become a rare exception. By usurpation, encroachment, surrender, or "commendation" the whole land had passed into the hands of the two privileged classes, the feudal nobility and the Church. But the regime of large estates cultivated by servile labour had ceased to be the rule even in Roman Gaul. The system that finally prevailed was, like all things mediæval, one of baffling complexity.

Of the land controlled by a lord, a certain portion was set apart as his personal domain (indominicata). The rest was divided into dependent holdings paying rent (census) and into tenements burdened with service. Originally the first were held by free peasants, the second by serfs. But the distinction never was very definite. Furthermore, the quality of the tenure passed from the person to the land itself, so that a certain piece of ground could be *per se* noble, censive, or servile. A serf could hold a censive without thereby becoming free; but a freeman settling on servile land would become a serf.

Of the dues collected by the lord, some were the attribute of sovereignty, and represented taxation. Justice, by the way, was invariably considered as a source of income. Others were tolls, often extortionate and vexatious enough, for economic services: for roads, bridges, and markets, or for the use of certain utilities of which the lord had a monopoly: these were called *banalities*, and there was no choice but the *banal* mill, bake-oven, or wine-press. Others still were in lieu of rent. Quaint and complicated as all these rights might be, they were not, however, essentially different from our present taxes, tolls, or fees.

The situation of the serfs, on the contrary, has no equivalent in our days. Serfhood was an offshoot of slavery, which had gradually disappeared under the Carolingians. It was slavery mitigated under economic and religious influences. Fundamentally the serf differed from the slave in three respects ; he specialized in agricultural labour—serfs as a rule were not domestic servants or craftsmen ; he was assigned an individual tenement, instead of being part of a huge exploitation ; and, with his family, he was perpetually attached to the soil—which was a guaranty as well as a bond. The serf, therefore, had something of a home. The transformation had begun in Roman times. The coloni and the læti were in some respects the prototypes of the mediæval serfs.

The improvement was by no means radical. For one thing, it was not an invariable rule that families should not be separated : we have an agreement between the monks of Marmoutier and some other landowner, in which the children of certain serfs are divided like heads of cattle. The tone of aristocratic, clerical, and even bourgeois literature shows plainly enough the utter contempt which the three established orders felt for the rustic—freeman as well as serf. He was accused of being filthy, cowardly, evil-minded, only half-human. *Villanus*, the villager, is the origin of *vilain*, which in French means ugly, and of our English *villain*. It seems that many lords treated the peasants exactly as they would have treated a herd: a source of wealth to be exploited in your own domain, to be destroyed in your enemy's.

From the economic and legal point of view the situation of the serfs could not well be worse. Their masters could exact from them taxes and services at will ; they were "taillables et corvéables à merci." The list of these dues, which varied from estate to estate and from generation to generation, is interminable. They included the capitation or chevage, a poll tax ; *formariage*—the serf could not marry, without his lord's permission, any one who did not belong to the domain ; *mortmain*—the serf had legally nothing of his own ; at his death his holding and goods reverted to the lord, who granted them to his heirs only on payment of heavy dues. As for the services (*corvées*), they were innumerable, for the serfs had to cultivate the lord's personal domain in addition to their own allotments. Some of these were burdensome and humiliating, like the oft-quoted duty of beating the water of the moat at night, so that the croaking of the frogs might not disturb the sleep of the lord in his castle. The most odious of these rights, the "Droit du Seigneur," of which we find an echo in *Le Mariage de Figaro*, may not have been wholly a legend: at any rate, it does not seem to have had any legal existence. Some of these tyrannical customs survived in outlying districts until the Revolution.

§ 2. MITIGATING INFLUENCES.

The Church.

The serfs were wholly in the hands of their lord, and against his injustice there was no appeal to a sovereign state; so far as they were concerned, he alone was the State. Yet forces were at work to improve their condition. First of all, the Christian spirit. The Church has never condemned slavery as an institution, and in feudal times she had wandered far astray from the spirit of the Gospel; but that divine plea for human brotherhood and peculiar kindness to the poor could not be wholly disregarded. For centuries Christianity was the most effective check against violence and injustice—which does not mean, alas! that it was very effective. The Church often took up the defence of oppressed peasants: the Peace of God, which was meant to protect her own domains, and the Truce of God, which sought to prevent the desecration of holy days, were of special benefit to the everlasting victims of private warfare, the tillers of the soil. The emancipation of serfs was considered as meritorious work: many a death-bed repentance was manifested through wholesale manumission. The Church, however, did not free her own serfs. This apparent inconsistency was not due to hypocrisy and selfishness. Church property did not belong to the clergy, but to God. Just as vassals had no right to "abridge their fief," the Church did not feel free to curtail in any way the privileges of her sacred trust. Her rule, on the whole, was mild: "It was good, as the proverb ran, to live under the crozier." She has always resented as rebellious any attempt to limit her authority. Hence the fact that the last serfs in France, in 1789, were those of the Abbey of Saint Claude.

Custom.

A second force which tempered the abject servitude of the peasants was the superstitious respect of the Middle Ages for tradition or *ancient custom.* Whatever had been done from time immemorial must be right: but a new departure might goad the victims to rebellion, and the lord himself would feel severe qualms of conscience before setting a new precedent. In this way wilful exactions were gradually reduced to a set of rules; the arbitrary power of the lord was curtailed; between him and his serfs a quasi-contract was created.

Economic Forces.

The third, and probably the most potent of these forces, was of an economic nature. We have seen that the nobility were careless and extravagant. Tourneys, the feasts of knighthood, the crusade, required a great outlay. It occurred to many a lord that more money could be wrung out of the serfs by agreement than by exaction. Thus was accelerated the commutation of arbitrary rights into definite taxes. Serfs might even be enfranchised for purely fiscal purposes, barely concealed by the high-flown language of the liberating charters. No wonder that the serfs would look twice at liberty thus proffered, compute the cost, and occasionally decline the gift. It might even happen that the lords had to compel their serfs to buy their unwelcome freedom.

Emigration.

The peasants might seek to improve their lot by shifting to some other place. In 1199 the inhabitants of the Isle of Ré threatened to emigrate, and received satisfaction; in 1204 the serfs of the Bishop of Laon went over to the territory of Enguerrand of Coucy; they were well received, but they were later compelled to return to Laon. Naturally the lords discouraged such desertion by all means in their power. An absconding serf was treated like a runaway slave, and his master, by agreement with the neighbouring gentry, had generally a right of pursuit or extradition. Yet the loose structure of feudal France was full of loopholes. In a country still so wild and covered with forests, it was not impossible for a serf to make good his escape. Then he could join a band of outlaws or a company of soldiers—there was little to choose between the two. He could also become one of those wandering peasants known as " guests " or " colonists," who offered their services to clear the forests and open up new tracks. He could seek refuge in a city, particularly in one of recent creation, to which a liberal charter had been granted so as to attract the population. But the risk was great : obedience was the safer course, in this world and in the world to come.

§ 3. HARDSHIPS AND REBELLIONS.

Hard was the lot of the peasants, even under a gentle lord, or on the land of the Church. Their thatched huts were unfloored and windowless ; their garments were made of coarsest hempen cloth : wool was reserved for their betters. A crude rotation of crops—spring cereal, winter cereal, fallow—condemned one-third of the land to idleness, and did not prevent the impoverishment of the soil. Their implements were very primitive, often reduced to the spade and the sickle. Cattle-breeding was little developed ; the oak forests provided food for innumerable hogs, and the people knew hardly any meat but pork. The insecurity of travel made it difficult for the surplus of one province to relieve the deficit of another : so there always was dearth in some part of the country. In the eleventh century there were forty-eight years of famine, eleven under the reign of Philip-Augustus. In all chronicles we find the same lamentable iteration. The Hundred Years' War, with ferocious bands constantly scouring the country, was a time of unutterable misery. Pestilence added its scourge to famine and war. The Black Death of 1348, which swept through the whole of Europe, was but the culmination of many lesser epidemics. In spite of these ravages the land was not wholly depopulated, thanks to the high birthrate : but the toll levied on young life was appalling.

We should not imagine that the mediæval peasant would accept with stolid resignation the injustice of his fate. Serfs might be driven into violent revolt, and we know that, on many occasions, castles were burnt and noble families murdered. This spirit of despair led, not only to local troubles, but to uprisings on a large scale. The Norman peasants rose under Richard II, 996–1027, and Wace, in the Romance of Rou, ascribes to them a "rustic Marseillaise" which has often been commented upon. It may be that this revolutionary song was an anachronism in the poem, but it represented, at any rate, a current of thought in Wace's own time, a century later than the events he related.

The White Hoods.

A curious movement was that of the White Hoods. A carpenter of Le Puy, moved, as he claimed, by a vision of the Virgin Mary (1182), founded a fighting brotherhood to curb the bands of soldiers who were ravaging the country. All classes united at first in this good work. But the people felt their own strength, and they began assailing the organized banditism of the aristocracy. We have echoes of their manifestoes in Church denunciations: "All strove to conquer liberty, saying that it was theirs by right, from the day Adam and Eve were created." But the established order is ever based on the assumption that privilege is the just reward of merit and subjection a deserved punishment. The peasants' revolt was directed against the ordinance of God himself: "Did they not know that servitude is the punishment of sin? As a result (of their claims) there would no longer be any distinction between great and small, but a fatal confusion, ruining the institutions that govern us, by the will of God, and through the ministry of the lords of this world." A most admirable statement of mediæval toryism. The Hooded Brothers were hunted down by clergy and nobility, with the aid of those very brigands they had sought to destroy.

The Pastoureaux.

Another popular movement was that of the Pastoureaux or Shepherds, who, learning that Louis IX was a prisoner in Egypt, assembled in 1251 for the purpose of delivering him. They accused the lords and the clerics of having betrayed the King, and their crusade assumed an anticlerical, heretical, and revolutionary colour. They were led by a mysterious character, the "Master of Hungary." They, too, were hunted like wild beasts, and massacred.

Jacquerie.

The worst of the peasants' insurrections was the Jacquerie[1] of 1358, which has remained a byword. It was on the rural population that the disasters of the time had fallen most heavily. The English had devastated the countryside; the French men-at-arms seized all they could so as to provision cities and castles against a siege. The peasants of Beauvais, and then those of Champagne and Picardy, turned against their masters. We do not possess, of course, their own version of what followed; it cannot be doubted that atrocities were committed. "Regular" troops—if there were any deserving the name—feudal courts, and even ecclesiastical tribunals freely resorted to torture to achieve their ends; it could hardly be expected that infuriated bands would display humanitarian scruples. The Jacques were reported at one time to be 100,000 strong: but this figure, like all rough guesses in times of excitement, is meaningless. They marched on Meaux, in the hope of joining hands with Etienne Marcel and the Parisian insurrection. But they were defeated, and for several weeks there was a frightful massacre of the Jacques. Massacre, and again massacre! A melancholy refrain in the history of the poor.

---

[1] The French peasant was known as Jacques, or Jacques Bonhomme.

§ 4. Waning of Serfhood.

Yet, whilst rebellion was roughly repressed, and economic conditions remained deplorable, the legal status of the peasants was none the less gradually raised during the Middle Ages. We have seen how, under the influence of Christianity, of custom, and of economic conditions, the worst features of serfhood had been mitigated. By the thirteenth century the institution was decidedly on the wane. The serfs, even when they remained serfs in name, were in practice hereditary tenants, and by the same process, a number of free-peasants could almost be termed landowners. The fact that the quality of servile or free was attached to the land, and not exclusively to the man, the very complicated formation of estates and holdings—one little plot here, another there, belonging maybe to different lords—brought about a weakening, almost a disruption, of the whole hierarchy. The feudal and manorial regime had hopelessly tangled itself in its own intricacies, and had become an absurdity. But then, its fundamental injustice appeared all the more glaringly. For the noble class retained privileges which were no longer justified by any pretence of service, and the very origin of which had become obscure. The castle, once, perhaps, the symbol of protection, order, justice, was nought but the haunt of oppression.

Rural Charters.

The peasants were not so favourably placed as the town dwellers for securing communal rights. A city, fortified against foreign foes, could defend itself against its own masters, and there was a numerous population to man the walls ; the village was helpless against the castle. However, many small rural communities were granted charters which, without turning them into full-fledged communes, gave them valuable immunities and privileges. The charters of Lorris and of Beaumont-en-Argonne served as models over wide areas ; the latter in particular was very liberal, and its benefits were enjoyed by a number of peasants.

Monarchical Sentiment.

It was not from the Commune, however, that the rural population expected salvation. They had a vague consciousness of a higher judge, the King. Faint traces of this feeling may be found under Louis VI and Philip-Augustus. It was enhanced by the renown of Saint Louis. So, if the personality and career of Joan of Arc are as miraculous as anything in history, the sentiment that prompted her was widespread and natural enough. Just as shepherds had risen in 1251 to deliver the Holy King, abandoned, as they thought, by lords and clergy, a shepherdess arose in 1429 to deliver the kingdom. The peasants had suffered most from feudal anarchy : it was fitting that they should embrace and support the alternative, monarchical unity.

CHAPTER V

URBAN CIVILIZATION: THE COMMUNES

§ 1. ORIGIN OF THE COMMUNES.

OF the one hundred and twelve cities of Roman Gaul a number had disappeared during the Dark Ages. Frankish rule was unfavourable to city life, and the kings themselves resided in their country estates rather than in permanent capitals. The centres that survived, impoverished, contracted, did not preserve their municipal institutions: no great loss, as the Roman regime had become grossly oppressive. The bishops had protected and governed the cities during the wild interregnum between Roman and Frankish sway. So, in most cases—in Amiens, Laon, Rheims, for instance—they became the official and permanent rulers of their episcopal seat as well as the spiritual lords of their diocese. Other cities, like Angers and Bordeaux, passed under the dominion of a layman, count, or duke. Paris and Orleans remained in the direct possession of the King.

A number of towns grew round some domain, abbey, or castle. At the time of the Norman invasions, in particular, the people deserted the open country, and huddled together behind fortified walls. Thus did Saint Omer, among others, come into existence.

The Renaissance of the eleventh and twelfth centuries fostered urban growth. In spite of great uncertainties and dangers, commerce, industry, and wealth began to revive. Economic progress had for its consequences the emancipation of the cities. A revolution may be a sign of exuberant energy rather than despair: it was in the richest trading and manufacturing communities—in Italy, on the Rhine, in Flanders—that the communal movement first broke out, and achieved its most complete and lasting success.

Municipal Republics of Southern France.

In Southern France the revolution took place with little violence: the riot and massacre at Béziers in 1167 were a terrible exception. Provence and Languedoc had never ceased to carry on their Mediterranean trade with Constantinople and even with the Infidels. A number of noble families lived in the cities; the princes showed themselves intelligent and liberal, and the sovereign—King of France or Emperor—was too far away to interfere. So the southern cities became veritable republics in miniature, with their Consuls or Capitouls. They even had the right of forming leagues and waging wars; and they were so similar to the Italian republics that they, too, adopted, in a few cases, the curious institutions of the Podestat—a foreign dictator invited to restore peace in a commonwealth torn by factions.

Insurrections in Northern France.

In Northern France, on the contrary, where the distinction was much sharper between the privileged classes and the common people, the revolution was not achieved without bloodshed. The Church in particular was uncompromising: Guibert of Nogent voiced the opinion of the clergy in the oft-quoted words: "Commune! A new and detestable name!" Augustin Thierry has told with great verve the insurrection in which the proud Bishop of Laon, forced to hide himself in a barrel, was discovered and hacked to death by the mob (1112). Châteauneuf, near Tours, rose twelve times in a century against its masters, the Abbots of Saint Martin: each time it was defeated.

Insurrection, however, was only a frequent exception. In general the franchise was won by more peaceable means. The barons were less obdurate than the Church. The granting of a charter might be a profitable business transaction: by limiting his own authority, the lord might make his income larger and safer. The inhabitants took advantage of the innumerable conflicts among their masters: rival claimants for a fief would actually bid against each other for the allegiance of the towns. The Crusades were a god-send to the burghers: the nobles needed money to set out, and mayhap they would never return, leaving their estate in a mediæval tangle. As for the kings, their policy was vacillating—*opportunistic* would convey too favourable an impression. Louis VI, long praised as the Protector, or indeed the Father, of the French communes, did confirm many charters granted by his vassals: it suited his purpose to act as a universal notary; but he did not hesitate to assist the lords against their rebellious subjects. It was Louis VII who made it a practice to help the communes in the domains of other lords, whilst discouraging them in his own. In the same way, modern states have been known to advocate self-determination and democracy beyond their borders. It would be unreasonable to expect in an early Capetian a consistency and a devotion to principle which are all too rare in our enlightened days.

§ 2. The Commune in the Feudal World.

Variety of the Charters.

Communal charters offer the greatest variety. We have noted the difference between the southern and the northern traditions, between the attitudes of the clergy, the barons, and the King. We must remember also that the present territory of France was then divided between three sovereigns whose policies were not correlated: the King of France, the King of England, and the Emperor. It did happen that certain charters became favourite patterns, and were reproduced a number of times: thus the statutes of Rouen, in the English domains, the charter of Lorris, among Capetian towns, and that of Beaumont-en-Argonne in the north-east. But the model was freely adapted, and no federal tie was created thereby—just as no bond is established between two American cities which decide to adopt the commission form of government. Some of these documents are extremely brief. Others are a long and confusing catalogue of minute stipulations. In many cases the written charter is known to have been but the confirmation of a *de facto* regime. The purport, however, is the same everywhere: it is a limitation of the lord's arbitrary power in taxation, justice, and government.

A Collective Barony.

Although the communal movement is a revolt against the feudal aristocracy, the commune, when it is fully constituted, takes its place in the feudal system: it becomes, as it were, a collective barony. There was nothing startling, for the mediæval mind, in such a conception: the monasteries and the canonical chapters had long presented the same character. Like any holder of a fief, the city had a suzerain, to whom it owed the services, both financial and military, of a vassal. It might have vassals in its turn. It had its banner; its seal, often with as defiant a motto as any lord's; its jurisdiction. The whole city, with its battlemented walls, was a vast castle, just as the feudal castle, with its several minor buildings huddled in the bailey, was a compact little city. The municipal bell-tower or belfry rose as proudly as a keep. The military rôle of the communes was not particularly brilliant. They have been extravagantly extolled for the share of their militia in the "national" victory of Bouvines. As a rule, they commuted military service for cash; in this again they were but following the example of many a feudal lord.

Territory.

The territory of the commune did not invariably coincide with its fortified enclosure. It might include certain suburbs without the walls; and within, the Bishop, the Count, or the King might retain direct authority over certain districts. The map of even a small city might offer the puzzling appearance that Germany presented before the ruthless simplification effected under Napoleon's auspices. The complexity of mediæval conditions is well exemplified in Arles. There the City proper belonged to the Archbishop; the Old Borough was divided between the Archbishop, the Count of Provence, and the Porcellet family; the Market had been granted as a fief by the Archbishop, one half to the Viscount of Marseilles, one half to the Viguier of Arles; finally the New Borough belonged to the Lord of Baux. To make confusion worse confounded, it should be remembered that many people had their personal status. The serfs were amenable to their masters, the clerics, nobles, and king's men only to ecclesiastical, feudal, or royal courts respectively.

§ 3. GROWTH OF AN URBAN OLIGARCHY.

Within its boundaries, who was a member of the Commune? In some cases every inhabitant was allowed to take the oath; in general, serfs were excluded. Frequently property qualifications were imposed: only householders and taxpayers could be burgesses and citizens, and the French word *bourgeois* still denotes the middle class alone as opposed to the people. The name, power, and mode of election of the governing body and of the chief magistrate were no less varied than the franchise. In the north the communes had not invariably secured the right of electing their mayors: the lord, in many cases, had a direct influence in their selection.

The tendency was for citizenship, and particularly for public offices, to become the monopoly of a few rich families. A communal aristocracy came into existence, which too often showed itself narrow and selfish. Like the lords, whom they aped in so many respects, the communes were extravagant and improvident. Their financial troubles gave the kings a chance of interfering, in the interests of the people at large, of public peace, and of sound finance. Philip the Fair, whose own monetary difficulties were notorious, acted as receiver for many communes. Under the administration of the King's officials some kind of order was restored; the old names were not seldom retained, but the old liberties were gone.

Communes and Villes de Bourgeoisie.

A distinction is usually made between the communes proper and the "villes de bourgeoisie." The former enjoyed political rights, which as a rule were established by contract; the latter had economic and administrative privileges only, which had been granted by their lord. In practice the two types shade off into each other. The charter of Lorris, which was extended to more than eighty towns and villages, gave the inhabitants practically no self-government; but the charter of Beaumont-en-Argonne (1182), which was copied by some three hundred small communities, made provision for an elective mayor and council: many northern communes were not so liberally treated as these little "villes de bourgeoisie."

Special mention must be made of the new cities, which were developed by methods still used at present for the opening up of a new tract. Often two lords co-operated in such a foundation—one temporal, the other ecclesiastic.

The plan of these new creations was almost as regular as that of an American town, and their charter was liberal. Among them were the numerous La Sauve, Sauveté, Sauveterre, in the south, the Bastides erected by the English kings, the Villefranches, and the Villeneuves.

Like feudalism, the communes slowly faded off before the rising splendour of the monarchy. No limit can be set to the communal age: names and forms survived as late as 1789. But the vitality of the movement was spent by the end of the thirteenth century: nor was it ever to regain its strength, even in the nineteenth. Mediæval democracy had its chance, and wasted it. We refuse to take the fatalistic view that, since it was so, it was better so. We may be allowed to regret the decadence of the communes. The sustained brilliancy of city culture in the Netherlands, in Germany, in Italy, shows that the national state was not the only conceivable framework for our civilization. All mediæval cities were not Florence, nor even Liége or Ghent; at any rate, they were alive. It may not have been for the best interests of France that the "universal spider," the monarchy, caught these curious little urban states into its nation-wide mesh.

CHAPTER VI

URBAN CIVILIZATION: COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY. THE GUILDS

§ 1. REVIVAL OF TRADE IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY.

Influence of the East.

THE great revival of the eleventh century affected trade as well as all other branches of human activity. Conquests, pilgrimages, and crusades, evidences of an energetic and adventurous spirit, opened up new commercial relations. Catalonia, Spain, Portugal, England, began exchanging products with Northern France. But the main highway of traffic was still the Mediterranean. Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and later Barcelona, Montpellier, Marseilles, traded extensively with Constantinople and with the Syrian ports, the terminals of caravan routes from the emporia of Bagdad and Damascus. In this economic expansion the crusade proper was not a dominant factor, but rather an untoward incident. The movement, both religious and commercial, which was bringing East and West into closer relations had begun before Jerusalem was taken by the Franks, and continued after the Holy City had fallen again into the hands of the Infidels. The luxury of the East was a revelation to the Westerners, just awaking from the uneasy slumber of the Dark Ages. Silk, satin, velvet, brocade, muslin, gauze, carpets, dye-stuffs, glass, paper, candies, sugar, spices, hemp and flax—most of the amenities and some of the necessities of life were introduced or rediscovered at that time. The economic expansion which, in any case, was bound to accompany the general renaissance was immeasurably hastened by this intercourse with Byzantine and Arabic civilization.

Commerce therefore took the lead of industry, and kept it all during the Middle Ages. Industry remained individual and local: the initiative, the spirit of co-operation, the risks and the profits, the wide outlook, belonged to the merchant, not to the producer. This is radically different from present conditions, under which the manufacturer seeks directly to control the sale of his products: the middleman is but his agent.

§ 2. Physical Handicaps.

The Roads.

The revival of commerce was heavily handicapped, after so many centuries of semi-barbarism. Many of the Roman roads and bridges had become impassable; the new highways were crude affairs, which a flood or a storm could put out of commission. Fords, ferries, or pontoon bridges were resorted to in the absence of more permanent structures. A young shepherd, Bénezet, inspired by a vision, started a bridge at Avignon, the meeting-place of the pilgrims going to Rome. This ancient structure is still famous in nursery lore, and its remaining arches are a bone of contention between engineers and archæologists. Certain monks made bridge-building their special mission, and contributions to their pious work were rewarded with "indulgences"; for, in the Middle Ages, no stone was laid without spiritual cement. The Church again provided rest-houses and hospitals, in the form of monasteries, in the wildest passes of the mountains. Among them was the famous Grand Saint Bernard, the usefulness of which remained unimpaired until the opening of the first Alpine tunnels, half a century ago.

Extortions and Brigandage.

More dangerous than natural difficulties were the attacks of brigands and the extortions of feudal lords. Tolls were levied at every turn; and frequently, as was natural in a civilization which had not fully outgrown the stage of barter, they were levied in kind. The monks of Beauvais helped themselves to the fish sent up to Paris, and the sires of Poissy, by the same right, sampled the wine which was going to the capital. A minstrel, at the Châtelet gate, could acquit himself with a verse, and a showman with a trick of his monkey; the expression, *payer en monnaie de singe*, is still current in French. These tolls were only occasionally the legitimate price paid for the use of some public utility; as a rule they were a hold-up. But organized robbery acquires respectability. A few nobles did not hesitate to practise plain brigandage. Pope Gregory VII accused King Philip I himself of robbing Italian merchants. However, the French monarchy, after the eleventh century, never sank so low as the Empire during the great interregnum, and the Raubritter never became a thoroughly French institution. The great feudal lords, and particularly the kings, as their power increased, came to see their advantage in protecting commerce from excessive vexations. Tolls were kept within bounds; it was required that in exchange the roads and bridges should be properly maintained, and the local lords were held responsible for the safety of the merchants traversing their domains. In spite of frequent wars, commerce ceased to be a quasi-impossibility.

§ 3. Financial Handicaps.

Credit.

One of the great difficulties of the time was the question of credit. Money-lending was condemned by the Church as usury. Canon law and Roman law were sharply at variance on that point. At first canon law prevailed exclusively. None but infidels, i.e. the Jews, could therefore be bankers. On the other hand, excluded as they were from all other trades and crafts, and from the cultivation of land, the Jews could hardly be anything but money-lenders. Philip-Augustus tolerated that they should charge at the rate of 46 per cent. The kings shared in the profits of a practice which they condemned, just as the modern French state derives an income from gambling-dens and horse-racing. It was a convenient, if not an ethical practice, to let the Jews suck their fill of Christian gold, and make them disgorge into the King's exchequer. The same process was applied to the rivals of the Jews, the Lombards: for those Italians had succeeded in evading ecclesiastical censure.[1] In the fourteenth century the men of Cahors entered this field of business. The Knights Templars, with rich estates everywhere, and more leisure than scruples, had also become bankers on a large scale. King Philip the Fair thought that their money could be put to better use in his hands, and destroyed the order, whose unpardonable sin was its opulence. In addition to licensed usury, secret usury was extensively practised. In spite of all the canons of the Church, ecclesiastical worthies with cash to spare yielded to the temptation of lending at 60 per cent. : so we are told, with an indignation that does him credit, by an Archbishop of Rouen.

---

[1] Lombard Street in London is still a banking centre.

Currency.

Business was greatly hampered by the absence of any standard currency. There were coins of all kinds throughout the realm. The King's money, however, was steadily gaining ground over its feudal rivals. Under Saint Louis it was kept so scrupulously sound that it became, as it deserved, the favourite medium of exchange. But the successors of the good King, Philip the Fair in particular, tampered with it and debased it repeatedly. So the money-changer, with his fine scales and his touchstone, was an essential agent in mediæval trade.

§ 4. Markets and Fairs.

As commerce expanded, new routes were opened, new markets created. Rouen, Rheims, Orleans, Toulouse, Paris, were permanent centres for vast regions. The Paris market, founded by Louis the Fat on the very site of the present Halles Centrales, was a general mart, like an Oriental bazaar. More important still were the great periodical fairs. In France the most famous were those of Flanders, of the Lendit (Saint Denys, near Paris), of Beaucaire in the south, and especially those of Champagne. These, held chiefly at Troyes, Provins, Lagny, Bar-sur-Aube, attracted merchants from Languedoc, Provence, Italy, Germany, Flanders, and England. Special advantages were granted them in the way of exemption from tolls and protection from brigandage. The Counts of Champagne, who derived much of their revenue from this source, saw to it that commerce was not molested. The brilliancy of the court of Champagne—an important factor in social and literary history in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—had an economic basis. The regulations of the fairs were left very much in the hands of the merchants themselves. These gatherings were naturally occasions for amusement as well as business.

They were absolutely ruined by the Hundred Years' War, and no effort to revive them was of any avail. It is hard to realize that such placid little towns as Lagny, Provins, and Bar-sur-Aube ever ranked among the busiest emporia of the West.

The King of Mercers.

A curious institution was that of the King of Mercers. The mercers, who were wholesale merchants and rich business men, dubbed themselves Knights of Mercerie ; and their " king," who had under his rule an extensive province, had his special income, his seal, his court of justice. However, there was no attempt to create a commercial state or even a distinct commercial aristocracy : it was merely, with the nomenclature familiar to the times, a consular service and a Merchants' Protective Association.

Jacques Cœur.

The French merchants never attained the supremacy which was enjoyed by the Italians in the Mediterranean, by the Portuguese in the West, by the Hansa League in the North. Some of them, however, were adventurous and successful enough. Dieppe traded with Morocco and the Coast of Guinea. John of Béthencourt, with a crew of adventurers from Dieppe and La Rochelle, conquered and ruled the Canaries. (1402) Jacques Cœur, from Bourges travelled over the whole of the Near East. He had vessels plying " to Barbary and even to Babylon," with three hundred agents in foreign parts. Charles VII, the King of the reconstruction period, entrusted the parlous finances of his realm to a man who had so well taken care of his own ; and it seems that in this, as in other departments, Charles was " well-served." Then, with the ingratitude so characteristic of that monarch, he sacrificed him to the jealousy of courtiers, and Jacques Cœur had to flee, half ruined, to Cyprus.

§ 5. THE GUILDS.

As in the case of feudalism and the communes, scholars have attempted to trace the guilds and crafts either to Roman or to Teutonic origins. In Paris the Roman college whose existence is most clearly established was that of the nautæ or mariners; and the first mediæval guild of which we have certain knowledge is that of the Water Merchants. Yet even in that case there is no proof that the filiation was unbroken. It would be difficult for men to ply the same trade within the walls of the same city without coming together. The age was favourable to associations of all kinds—monastic or knightly orders, universities, communes. The growth of urban life was bound to lead to some form of economic organization.

The Brotherhood.

A distinction should be made between the Confrérie, or Brotherhood, and the Métier, or Craft. The Brotherhood was a religious, social, and charitable organization. It was, as a rule, but not exclusively, composed of men of the same trade. According to mediæval custom, this implied that they were recruited from the same neighbourhood: without any rigid rule to that effect, certain streets were reserved for certain lines of business, and the names of many thoroughfares in Paris are still reminiscent of their ancient commercial affectation: thus the Quai de la Mégisserie and the Pont au Change.[1] The formal bond of union of a brotherhood was to honour a certain saint, selected for some obvious or fanciful reason. The brethren adorned his chapel with a stained glass window or a statue, and kept his altar illuminated: the whole corporation was often known as the "cierge" or "candle" of such or such a saint. The Saint's Day was the occasion for the procession, mass, and banquet without which no festivity was conceivable in the Middle Ages. By such an association, under religious auspices, labour was ennobled: a carpenter, for instance, would look with pride and pleasure upon a statue of Saint Joseph holding the attributes of his trade. We may hope that a tanner would likewise find comfort and inspiration in a figure of Saint Bartholomew carrying his skin under his arm. A spirit of brotherliness was fostered between masters and men. These picturesque and touching traditions still survive in many parts of France. But in spite of their religious character, these associations repeatedly incurred the suspicion of the Church, as possible centres of heresy and rebellion. Saint Bernard, in 1157, denounced the weavers as infected with Catharism.

---

[1] The Rue des Lombards, once devoted to banking like Lombard Street in London, has become the centre of herbalists; Rue Vide-Gousset (Pick-pocket Street) lies in the heart of the financial district, between the Bank of France and the Stock Exchange.

§ 6. The Craft.

The craft was almost co-extensive with the brotherhood, but with a different purpose. It was strictly an economic organization. The ideal of the Middle Ages was not free trade but fair trade: an honest price for honest work. Hence the growth of regulations based at first upon agreement, then upon custom, which finally became both extremely complicated and extremely rigid.

We should not imagine, however, that the craft system prevailed all over France in all its rigour. In rural districts it was practically unknown; throughout the south it remained rudimentary; and even in certain large cities like Lyons it never was the rule. Home industry for home consumption was much more frequent than in our own days, and, in spite of prohibitions, it was not always practicable to check the "forains" or itinerant workmen. It was not until the end of the Middle Ages that the practices of Paris became a national standard.

Most of the crafts were definitely organized by the end of the twelfth century. Many had their privileges granted or confirmed by Philip-Augustus. Finally, under Saint Louis, the Provost of Merchants in Paris, Etienne Boileau, requested them to have their statutes registered: hence the priceless compilation known as the *Book of Crafts* (Livre des Métiers). In 1291 a tax roll for Paris comprised 4,159 names of artisans, belonging to 350 different trades. The chief Parisian industries were then very much the same as in our own days: clothing, haberdashery and jewellery. The butchers formed a powerful, monopolistic corporation: hereditary owners of their stalls, they would rent them out and live like gentlemen of leisure. The vast number of crafts shows a differentiation of industry which has no strict equivalent to-day. Each artisan would make a complete article from start to finish, without division of labour; but he would make only one very definite kind of ware. This was still the case, on the very eve of the Great War, with many local French industries: the cutlers of Bassigny, for instance. A line had to be drawn between the three different kinds of cobblers; or between the five varieties of hatters. Throughout the Middle Ages and the classical period those subtle distinctions were the cause of innumerable conflicts.

The early regulations formed on the whole a liberal regime. They were self-imposed: the King intervened only to lend them the authority of his name. They were framed for the mutual protection of masters and men; and at first they were not compulsory upon those workers who chose to remain without. But the usual evolution took place, from agreement to regulation, from regulation to privilege, from privilege to tyranny.

§ 7. APPRENTICE, JOURNEYMAN, MASTER.

Each trade comprised the three degrees of apprentice, journeyman, and master. Even masters' sons had to go through the apprenticeship. This covered a very long period: three years in the most favourable cases, six, nine, and even twelve in others. This is partly accounted for by the fact that each workman had to master every branch of his business, and even to make his own instruments, instead of learning a few mechanical tricks. But the thorough-going character of the training is not sufficient to explain why, for instance, it took twelve years to qualify as a maker of coral beads. It was really a means of exacting a premium in the form of free service, in addition to the cash premium which was generally stipulated. The comfort and fair treatment of the apprentices were guaranteed in their articles. Each master could take but a limited number of them at one time—seldom more than two or three, unless they were masters' sons. Thus they could be properly taught, and the profession was preserved from over-crowding.

Journeyman.

The varlets or workmen could not offer their services directly to the public, but only to masters. The unemployed met, every day in certain trades, every week in others, at an appointed place. They were hired by the day, week, or year. Combinations and strikes were not unknown: indeed the workmen were but following the example set before them by the clergy, the professors of the University, or even the judges of the Parliament of Paris. The modern

French word *grève* reminds us that workmen out of a job used to congregate on the Place de Grève, an open square on the right bank of the Seine, and the centre of municipal life. The day's work was from sunrise to sunset: night-work was generally prohibited, as difficult to supervise. This might mean sixteen hours at the bench or loom in mid-summer. However, it should be remembered that the shops were closed in time for Vespers on Saturday, that Sunday rest was rigorously enforced, and that there were a number of Church holidays. Thus did the spirit of the Church pervade economic life and mitigate its hardships: it was the parish bell which called the workmen to their task in the morning and announced the end of their labour. We may note also that the pace was not terrific: the *ca' canny* policy was not invented yesterday, and the mediæval conception of efficiency was thoroughness rather than high speed.

Master.

Early in the twelfth century any journeyman could set up as a master, "provided, according to the formula, that he knew the trade and had the wherewithal." The custom grew of requiring an examination and a practical test or *masterpiece*. Perhaps the clearest survival of that practice is the German and American doctor's dissertation. In certain trades only—twenty out of the hundred registered in Boileau's book—a tax had to be paid to the King: a trace of the time when all labour was servile and could not be exercised without the lord's permission. The examiners and the brotherhood had also their fees, and the older masters their feast, the details of which were settled as definitely as a church ritual. On the whole, there was no insuperable obstacle to the ambition of a worthy journeyman.

§ 8. ADVANTAGES OF THE MEDIÆVAL SYSTEM.

Each master was at the same time a manufacturer and a retailer. The work was actually done in the shop, under the customer's eyes: a practice which still survives in the case of the cobblers and of the locksmiths. The public frequently remained without: the streets were like the aisles between the stalls of a market. The large shop window was closed at night with stout horizontal shutters, with hinges at the top and at the bottom. In the day-time the lower part would drop, and form a stall to display the wares; the upper part would be raised as a protecting shed. Over the door could be seen a picturesque sign, which even the illiterate might understand and remember, and which might become as honourable as a coat-of-arms to generations of honest masters.

This patriarchal system made for industrial peace and careful work. There was no cut-throat competition, no profiteering. The available supply of material and labour was to be shared equitably among the masters. It was no idyl: we know that apprentices, at times, had to run away from cruel treatment; that the men did not always feel themselves fairly treated, and that fraud would not have been so carefully legislated against if it had not been a constant danger. But on the whole, it is not impossible to understand why certain nineteenth century writers have considered the economic life of the Early Middle Ages as a lost paradise.

Spirit of Privilege.

Unfortunately, the craft hardened with age, and became abusive. It obtained a rigid monopoly of its own trade, at least in Paris; and in the craft as in the commune, monopoly engendered a selfish oligarchical spirit. The masters' sons had always been favoured: the custom grew to reserve for them alone the privileges of the trade. The requirements of the masterpiece were made easy for them, or even waived altogether, whilst for the aspiring journeyman they became more exacting and more expensive. The number of masters' licences was limited. So the title of master became in fact almost hereditary.

The monarchy had favoured this evolution. Philip the Fair, always for the same reason, namely lack of pence, increased the number of trades in which the master's title had to be purchased from the King. After the Black Death readjustment was necessary: the kings sided openly with the masters so as to repress the ambitions of the working-men. At the time of Etienne Marcel (1357), and again during the civil war between Armagnacs and Burgundians, the crafts intervened in politics. The butchers in particular played a great part under the name of Cabochiens, and were responsible for the Ordinance of 1413, a complete charter for the realm which was never put to the test. The monarchy, regaining power under Charles VII, took advantage of these rebellions to place the crafts more directly under its control. By the time of Louis XI the character of the regime which was to survive until the Revolution was fixed. The craft had a monopoly of its trade ; the masters were hereditary, and the whole organization was strictly under the supervision of the King. Thus was sealed the alliance between the middle class and the monarchy, which was such a persistent factor in French history.

§ 9. Compagnonnage.

Journeymen would frequently round off their apprenticeship by wandering from city to city, seeing the world, and learning the local refinements of their trade : we have already mentioned the restlessness of all classes in the Middle Ages. This was called the Tour of France. For their mutual protection during this tour the workers formed secret societies or "companies." Each "companion" was initiated into his "duty" under some assumed name. In every town on the circuit he would find a rallying-point, generally an inn, called the "Mother." Like all secret societies, the companies were discouraged by the Government and the Church. Yet they lived on, with their quaint nicknames and mysterious rites, into the nineteenth century ; traces of them still linger at present, by the side of the modern unions. It does not appear that they ever had any serious economic influence.

Freemasonry.

Akin to the companies was Freemasonry, which was probably formed among the cathedral builders of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As they moved from country to country, and had elaborate professional traditions to transmit, such an association would be of very special value to them. Their connection with their modern namesakes is not clearly established : neither is their claim to direct filiation from Hiram, the architect of Solomon's temple.

CHAPTER VII

BOURGEOIS CULTURE

§ 1. Mediæval Cities.

War, fire, decay, have played havoc with the mediæval towns. To these scourges must be added, direst of all, the triple vandalism of ignorance, archæology, and "progress": to the Jacobine iconoclasts, the over-zealous pupils of Viollet-le-Duc, and the provincial imitators of Haussmann many irreparable atrocities should be charged. Precious relics still exist, however, which enable us to imagine the art and life of the times.

Fortified.

Three southern cities, in particular, have retained their fortifications almost entire: Avignon, the favourite of the popes; Aigues-Mortes, a seaport under Saint Louis, now stranded in the dismal, feverish plain; and the embattled hill of Carcassonne, a unique vision of picturesque grandeur. In the north, constantly exposed to the threat of invasion, the defences of the cities had to be repeatedly modernized.

Cramped.

Within these rigid circles of stone the growing agglomerations were constantly cramped for space and panting for breath. The houses covered every available site; they would lean familiarly against rampart, church, or town hall; they rose precariously over the bridges, whose foundations, cumbrous and frail, gave way at times before the accumulation of ice or wreckage. Three, four, even five storeys were piled up; each projected over the one below; the eaves of the gable were overhanging still further, so that, from the muddy depths of these cañons, barely wide enough to admit one cart, a mere jagged slit of sky could be seen. Whilst in the south stone was freely used, the north had to be satisfied with half-timbered construction, with wattle-and-daub filling between the joists. It was this prevalence of wood, this contiguity of the buildings, combined with the inadequate water supply, that made fires so frequent and disastrous, and the lugubrious tocsin such a familiar sound. There are still many such houses in existence: very few in Paris—even in the narrow and crooked streets which have escaped Haussmann's pickaxe, the flat façades of dirty plaster have no redeeming feature; more in small, somnolent cities like Bayeux; some even in places of ancient wealth and proud tradition like Angers.

Picturesque.

But Rouen, which enjoys the double privilege of being an archæological museum and a thriving commercial centre, gives perhaps the sharpest vision of a mediæval town. Even there much colour has been lost. In those days the eternal twilight of the twisting lane was enlivened with picturesque details: the open shops revealing the craftmen plying their trade, the woodwork carved and painted, the ingenious signs swinging overhead, the lighted niche of some virgin or saint, and, more miraculous through the sudden contrast, a glimpse of a chiselled spire.

Unsanitary.

The serried ranks of houses opened only for the market-place, often surrounded with arcades like a Spanish plaza,[1] and for the Parvis, or cathedral square. At some cross-roads stood the pillory, and, close by the Church, the cemetery and the charnel-house. The soil of the Innocents, in the heart of Paris, was putrid with accumulated human corruption. Drainage was primitive, and no street was paved in the capital until the reign of Philip-Augustus. This absolute disregard of hygiene was visited upon the inhabitants in the form of constant epidemics. But, with the touching idealism of the time, they ascribed these scourges to the wrath of God.[2]

---

[1] Cf. the wonderful "Places" of Arras, now in ruins.

[2] In one respect, however, the Middle Ages were ahead of the classical period: "étuves," or Turkish baths, seem to have been a popular institution.

The Richer Houses.

Among the narrow timbered houses a few larger and more substantial buildings stood out: their walls were of stone, their roofs covered with lead or even with copper, their doorways adorned with armorial bearings. A turret, containing the winding stairs, and frequently a crenellated cornice, gave these mansions a feudal touch. These were the abodes of noblemen, officials, abbots, bishops, or even of rich merchants. There are two well-preserved specimens in Paris, the Hôtel de Sens and the Hôtel de Cluny. Best of all is the house of Jacques Cœur at Bourges, solid and tasteful, a fitting home for a great financier and "prominent citizen." By the close of the Middle Ages such *bourgeois* residences vied in luxury with the castles of the nobility. Then were begun those collections of heirlooms which, in spite of many revolutions, are still found in the old provinces.[1]

Churches.

The pride of the city was its churches. Victor Hugo and Viollet-le-Duc saw in Gothic art a pure manifestation of the secular and municipal spirit. This is excessive, no doubt, but it is plain that the cathedrals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were not erected solely to the glory of God. Cities, under the leadership of their bishops, vied with each other in rearing and adorning a bolder, larger temple. If the church was an encyclopædic museum in stone and stained glass, it was also a meeting-house as well as a place of worship. Each brotherhood had its chapel or niche therein; the important burgesses could attend mass on the very tomb of their forefathers, buried under the flag-stones of the nave. The vaults of Notre-Dame echoed to the bitter arraignment of the Pope by the agents of King Philip the Fair, and the assemblies held in the church endorsed the policy of their temporal sovereign. The committees of the University met at Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre. The Middle Ages did not know our separation of church and life: the people were at home in the house of God.

---

[1] Cf. Balzac's minute description, it might almost be called an inventory, of the Claes house in *The Quest of the Absolute.*

Town Halls.

There are very few cities that possess both a cathedral of the first rank and a good Gothic town hall. It is not in France proper, but in Flanders, that we must look for the best examples of civic architecture, with the proud belfry in which are blended the attributes of church tower and baronial keep. Even the north has nothing that bears comparison with Louvain, Ypres, Malines, Brussels, Bruges. Some of the very best French town halls suffered heavily during the Great War. Saint Quentin, with its three gables, Compiègne, with its strong and yet graceful tower, were brutally damaged. The most elaborate of them all, Arras, raising to a height of 250 feet the heraldic lion, symbolic of the city, is but a heap of charred stone.[1]

§ 2. THE CITY SPIRIT.

Pageants.

This contracted and picturesque stage was filled with intense life. The Middle Ages were fond of ceremonies, processions, pageants. The exit of the suzerain might be at times hurried and informal enough, but the state entries, the wedding feasts, the visits from foreign lords, were occasions for magnificent display. French towns, in spite of illiberal restrictions, have not yet totally abandoned the custom of great processions, especially on Corpus-Christi Day. All the guilds were there, in festal array, banners fluttering; temporary chapels or "repositories" were erected with green boughs and adorned with flowers, wherever the Eucharist was to stop; from every window carpets or tapestries were hung—a decoration less gaudy than the bunting of modern times. A generation ago, at Angers, these processions were still followed by grave burgesses in mediæval costumes. After all, in the great age of faith, the carnival spirit was ever hovering about religion, and there was an easy transition from a church ceremony to the riotous mock-processions of M. and Mme. Gayant, the Gog and Magog of Northern France.

Miracles, Mysteries.

The same curious blend of display, fun, and faith can be found in the miracles and mysteries: we have seen what a tremendous development they took in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, engrossing for weeks the thoughts of even a beleaguered city, combining the elements of ritual, drama, and municipal function. The drama in all its varieties is the product of urban life, and it was in the cities—perhaps on the very steps of the cathedrals—that comedy was born as well as tragedy. In 1262 Adam de la Halle wrote *Le Jeu de la Feuillée,* a fantastic medley or "revue," full of satirical allusions to his fellow-citizens of Arras; in 1285 was performed, at the court of Naples, his other play, *Robin and Marion*, the earliest of our comic operas. The fourteenth century has left us no comedy.

---

[1] The belfry was built in 1554, and shows traces of Renaissance influences; but the earlier part of the hall was Gothic.

Comic Drama.

In the fifteenth century were founded companies of merrymakers. Most famous among them were the Basoche, recruited among lawyers' clerks, and the Careless Children, or Fools (Enfants Sans-Souci, or Sots), who probably continued outside the Church the traditions of the grotesque ceremonies such as the Pope of Fools. They played allegories, either moralities or "soties," which frequently had a satirical and political turn, and were used by Kings Louis XI and Louis XII to influence public opinion. But the most racy form of popular drama was the farce. The few that we possess do not represent the bulk of mediæval production in that line: it is probable that most farces were never written, but improvised on the basis of a rough scenario, like the *Commedia dell' arte.* The farce and the popular tale or fabliau are so closely akin in spirit that we might expect to see the same subjects treated in dramatic and in narrative form: Molière's *Médecin Malgré Lui* is a mediæval fabliau. Yet, in the fifteenth century, any direct connection between them is hard to trace. *Maître Pathelin* (1470) is the masterpiece of the *genre*: it shows us a rascally lawyer cheating a wool merchant, but cheated in his turn by a shepherd, whom he himself has taught to feign idiocy. A modernized version of this amusing skit was popular in the eighteenth century; restored to its original form, it still holds the stage.

Uncertain Boundaries of Bourgeois Culture.

Any definite line drawn between courtly and bourgeois literature is bound to be arbitrary. It is probable that, then as now, the best families among the commoners were, if anything, more intelligent and refined than the nobility. They enjoyed the romances of chivalry, the allegorical poems, and the love lyrics no less than did the lords and ladies in their castles. The two charming plays of Adam de la Halle appealed apparently to both publics, and the *Romance of the Rose*, by Guillaume of Lorris, was evidently popular among city readers. In the south, at any rate, a number of the lesser noblemen lived in the cities, and were enrolled among the burgesses. In the north the dynasties of merchants grew opulent enough to secure leisure and cultural influence. In the provincial capitals, in the university towns, and particularly in Paris, there existed a fairly large body of educated men—clerics, lawyers, and officials. People of widely different stations may have enjoyed concurrently the barbaric heroism of the Chansons de Geste, the preciosity of the Breton romances, and the racy tales of the knaves errant. Some authors and their works defy classification: if Machault and Alain Chartier may be labelled "aristocratic" poets, the name would fit neither Rutebeuf, under Saint Louis, nor Villon, under Louis XI. These are city products indeed—Bohemian songsters of the garret, the gutter, and the tavern, rather than of the princely court and the bourgeois parlour. Most curious of all, for the student of social forces in literature, are the many works in which a dual inspiration can be traced. Thus the *Pilgrimage of Charlemagne*, an epic as early as the Roland, and full of burlesque elements; thus the Janus-like *Romance of the Rose*; thus *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*, a manual of knightly demeanour which turns into a broad fabliau. But, elusive as its boundaries may be, there is in literature such a thing as the bourgeois spirit; it might be more accurate to say, the spirit of the lower or petty bourgeoisie.

Of this spirit the best known products are the Fabliaux, the *Romance of Renart*, and the second part of the *Romance of the Rose.*

§ 3. FABLIAUX.

The Fabliaux or short stories were meant for entertainment rather than for edification. They must have been current for untold generations before a few of them were put into French verse and thus secured a niche in literature. Many, perhaps most of them, are found in other languages, and their origin has been traced to the fabulous mother of all culture, India. They were transmitted through the Byzantines, through the Arabs of Syria, through the Moors and the Jews of Spain. Perhaps this is fetching too far afield for the genealogy of such obvious tales. The love of children, great and small, for amusing stories, needs no accounting for, and the trifling episodes which serve as a basis for the fabliaux may well be of universal experience. The fabliaux were told at assemblies, and particularly at table, when copious eating and drinking had created an atmosphere more favourable to mirth than to extreme delicacy. Some fabliaux are proper; a few have even a moralizing turn; but the frequent obscenity of the plot, the coarseness of the language, and a constant tone of misogyny lead us to infer that ladies had withdrawn when *Auberée* or *Le Souhait Insensé*, for example were recited.

The heroes are commonly peasants, bourgeois, minor clerics, beggars and pickpockets. The plot is of the slightest: a student's prank, a "gentle grafter's" trick, a woman's wile. The tone is one of universal and frank irreverence. Not only are knights and monks, when opportunity offers, held up to ridicule as freely as commoners, but the very saints do not go unscathed. A villein breaks somehow into Paradise: Saint Peter, Saint Thomas, Saint Paul, attempt to expel him: but he reminds them sharply of their own transgressions, and they give up the fight.

Isopet.

By the side of the fabliaux we find the standard fables of animal life. For these also an Indian ancestry has been claimed. Be this as it may, through debased prose versions of Phædrus, they had become folk property in the Early Middle Ages. Marie of France, she of the graceful Breton lays, translated from English into French verse a number of these ancient apologues. Her collection was called Isopet—a diminutive of Æsop—and the name remained attached to all similar works.

Renart the Fox.

Many fables had for their hero the Fox—cunning personified; many opposed him to the Wolf, who stood for brute force. Out of this obscure wealth of traditions grew the immense cycle of *Renart.* But the *Romance of Renart* is more than the piecing together of related fables. For one thing, the moral lesson, which was the main element in Æsop of Phædrus, is dropped altogether: the aim of Renart is to amuse or to mock, but hardly ever to preach. Then the heroes are individualized; they receive proper names, which will go down to history. Our fox is Renart—and Renard, in French, has supplanted the old word "goupil"; our wolf is Isengrin; the bear is Bruin, the lion Noble, the cat Tibert, the cock Chanticler.[1] The story becomes gradually a satire of human society; in the later "branches" the last traces of animal lore are practically lost sight of; the heroes are men, on whom the traditional names and attributes sit rather absurdly. Renart was a universal favourite in the Middle Ages; and its popularity proved lasting. Goethe himself found pleasure in writing a modern version of the old Flemish *Reinaert de Vos,* which in its turn was inspired by the French *Judgment of Renart.*[2]

§ 4. The "Romance of the Rose," Second Part.

Guillaume of Lorris had left his *Romance of the Rose* unfinished. Some forty years later (*c.* 1270) Master Jehan Clopinel, of Meun-sur-Loire, then a student in Paris, was moved to complete the famous poem. A few hundred lines added to the 4,000 of Guillaume would have sufficed: for good measure, Clopinel gave us 18,000. He respected the general scheme of his predecessor: an allegorical dream in which the loved one is figured by a Rose in a Garden of Delight. But spirit and style are radically different. Guillaume is a graceful, courtly poet, somewhat affected, but capable of artistic restraint to a degree rare in his days; his best passages have the deftness of touch and the transparent purity of colour of a miniature. Clopinel's composition is chaotic; his language, correct, easy flowing, and singularly vigorous, is at times aggressively vulgar. There is no sweet prettiness about him: his master-strokes are bits of realism, philosophy, or satire. Guillaume expounded the exalted conception of chivalrous love: Jehan drags woman from her pedestal, and exposes her frailties with the fierce vindictive delight current among clerics and bourgeois. There is nothing in Guillaume's poem beyond an Art of Love: Jehan's is an encyclopædia into which he poured all his vast store of knowledge, his prejudices, his surprisingly definite and bold opinions about institutions and men. Five centuries before Rousseau he describes the origin of property and of government in terms which, in our own days, might be suppressed as revolutionary. He has been called, by no less a judge than Gaston Pâris, the Voltaire of the Middle Ages. It may be added that his hatred of hypocrisy shows spiritual kinship with Molière as well as Voltaire: Faux-Semblant is a worthy ancestor of Tartuffe. His denunciation of arbitrary restraints, his faith in "Nature," are anticipations of Rabelais, and of the Renaissance spirit at its best.

---

[1] The fox's name, Ragenhard, Reinhard, Renart, is manifestly of Germanic origin; so are several others, Isengrin, Richild, Hersind. It is most probably in Northern France, Teutonic by race, and still in close touch with Germany, that the whole cycle has developed in the eleventh century.

[2] We may mention here a curious satire, the *Romance of Fauvel* (early fourteenth century). Fauvel is a tawny horse, the symbol of human vanity. All sorts and conditions of men vie with each other in combing and currying him: the Holy Father pats his head, the villeins braid his tail. Our expression "curry favour" is a trace of the popularity once enjoyed by this strange allegory.

This curious monster—two unequal, ill-assorted poems under the same title—achieved instant success. There is no literary work in the Middle Ages that was transcribed so repeatedly as the *Romance of the Rose*: the number of manuscripts which have come down to us is not far short of two hundred. The book was too outspoken not to invite fierce criticism in return. Christine de Pisan, that excellent blue-stocking, who broke many a lance in defence of her sex, could not let Clopinel's cynical comments pass unchallenged. Gerson, the dignified Chancellor of the University of Paris, objected to the frank unchastity and the dangerous daring of many passages. It may be noted that these discussions took place a century and a quarter after the poem had come out: a striking tribute to its vitality. Assailed or lauded, it was read in France, in Italy, in England, and its favour did not wane until the sixteenth century was well on its way: Clement Marot, the only poet of the old school to be fully appreciated by the new, gave an edition of the *Romance of the Rose*.

§ 5. STRENGTH AND LIMITATIONS OF THE BOURGEOIS SPIRIT.

It would be idle to deny that the "bourgeois" spirit has vigorous qualities; it has common sense, and a definite grasp of immediate realities. Polite literature escapes from the close atmosphere of the ladies' court only to lose itself in the haze of a childish fairyland ; it is a relief to be on solid earth again. Rabelais, Lafontaine, Molière, Balzac, Maupassant, all show traces of the bourgeois tradition. But that spirit lacks poetry, and especially generosity. Tough, cynical, not seldom foul, it sullies every great subject it touches. It sees nought but the seamy side of life ; not religion, but the avarice, hypocrisy, and licentiousness of clerics ; not love, but the deceitfulness or shrewishness of women ; not the people struggling and suffering, but the villein, dirty, grasping, and stupid. The legend of Charlemagne, refracted through the petty bourgeois mind, becomes a parody freely sprinkled with obscenities. It was said of Jehan of Meun : " The Rose wilts at his touch." Its fun is cruel : it is an eternal Væ Victis !—that *Schadenfreude* which Germany alone can name, but which is not unknown in other parts. It is a pæan to successful cunning : its hero is Renart the Fox, duping everyone, and grinning at his victim. It is a commonplace that in every nation there is a Don Quixote and a Sancho Panza ; the aristocracy could be quixotic at times—even the common people had their flashes of the crusading or of the national fire : the mediæval bourgeois hardly ever. Political history and literary history come to the same verdict. And yet these " petty bourgeois " worshipped in the Gothic churches, which seem to us permeated with mysticism ! Probably the religious aura or these great temples has grown, not fainter, but purer and stronger, with the centuries. Or must we admit that the authors and heroes of the fabliaux were strange guests in the cathedrals, planned by men of another breed ? No civilization is homogeneous, whether its symbol be the Virgin or the Dynamo ; and it is vain to attempt any reconciliation between its extremes.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ROYAL POWER IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCH AND WITH FEUDALISM

§ 1. Humble Beginnings.

The contrast between the pretensions of the first Capetians and their actual power was painful and almost ludicrous. The trappings of office were theirs—crown and robe, sceptre and hand of justice. In theory they had lost none of the prerogatives of Charlemagne; their authority was recognized, vaguely, even in the utmost confines of France; there are acts in the far south dated from the accession of the reigning Capetian. In fact, anarchy or local tyranny prevailed. The last Carolingian capitularies are dated 884; there are no Capetian laws—if they may be called laws—until the twelfth century. The King, whose title was not even hereditary, was defied within his own duchy of France by any baron who felt strong enough behind his castle walls. Beyond his personal domain he had no power, and his prestige was a shadow. Monarchy was a high-sounding name, feudalism a custom, force alone a fact.

Two centuries later force is unmistakably on the side of the kings. Feudalism is not yet curbed: on the contrary, it is more definitely organized than ever. But instead of a mosaic of independent baronies, there is a France, and she knows she has a ruler. Philip-Augustus, Louis IX, are among the foremost sovereigns in Christendom. Under Philip the Fair the modern organs of the state begin to appear with some definiteness. Nor will this recovered state-consciousness wholly disappear again, even in the worst hours of the Hundred Years' War.

Progress not due to Individual Genius.

This successful evolution was not due to commanding personalities. There is no Cæsar, no Charlemagne, no Peter the Great among the Capetians; nor is there by their side any uncrowned king of masterful genius, a Richelieu, a Bismarck. Louis VI was an active fighter until he grew too obese to ride; but he worked on a local stage. Philip-Augustus combined personal vigour with wise statesmanship; the kingdom grew apace under his hands; yet he can hardly be called a creator. Louis IX was the ideal King of the Middle Ages; but in worldly affairs he was guilty of many blunders, and his conception of the Christian monarchy was feudal rather than national. Charles V was called the Wise: he was at best a temporizer, who wore out the rebellious spirit of the Parisians and the energy of the English invaders; he had no constructive policy. Louis XI is renowned for his craftiness: but his was a confused cunning, overreaching itself; he had to wriggle with small grace out of scrapes of his own contriving. By the side of these, the most brilliant of the mediæval kings, the rest are dim figures: like Hugh Capet and his three immediate successors, or like the three sons of Philip the Fair. Some are among the most foolish sovereigns that ever imperilled a throne: Philip VI, John II, poor mad Charles VI. Most typical of this impersonal quality in the growth of the French monarchy are the reigns of Philip the Fair and Charles VII. During the first of these we descry, unlovely but distinct enough, the lineaments of a modern state; but the King himself is a mystery—"a handsome statue," said one contemporary; "he can but stare stupidly like an owl," said another. Of any definite desire, principle, or virtue on the part of that prince we find no trace. Under Charles VII the Hundred Years' War came to a triumphant close. Some of its ravages were repaired; the kingdom was reorganized. The King looked on passively, as indolent in Paris as he had been at Bourges, "well-served" and thankless, not stirring a finger to save Joan of Arc, dropping Jacques Cœur without a word. Behind the conventional mask of royalty we suspect a face puny and selfish. There is no stronger argument in favour of monarchy than its ability to survive the vices of monarchs.

The French monarchy did not grow because of the genius or virtue of the Capetians: it grew because reviving civilization needed *order*, which neither feudalism nor the Church could provide. A feudal order is conceivable, based on contract, hierarchy, personal loyalty. But feudalism remained either the embodiment of brute force or a jungle of conflicting customs. Born of chaos, it could generate nothing but chaos. A theocratic order is possible; but faith was never so absolute that spiritual discipline could be entirely relied upon, and clerics could not fight. The monarchy, humble though it was, became the necessary rallying-point. But it grew within the feudal and the Catholic systems, borrowing much of its strength from them, yet independent, and not seldom antagonistic. To the very last, in 1789, perhaps even as late as 1873, it remained entangled with the feudal class and the Catholic Church, and perished because it could not sever the connection.

§ 2. RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCH.

Alliance.

With the Church the relation was always an alliance. About the year 1000, the Church owned one-third of the land and had a monopoly of culture; the King was a mere baron, first but in name among his peers. It was the Church which prevented the royal idea from disappearing altogether. For the feudal lords, who could scarcely read, the traditions of Rome—unity, government, law—meant very little. The Church, the keeper and living symbol of these great ideas, remembered and understood. She needed a temporal power to protect her vast domains and support her spiritual authority. She longed for a Constantine, a Theodosius, a Clovis, a Charlemagne, albeit on a humbler scale. The Capetians did their part. They fought under the banners of Saint Martin and Saint Denys. Robert the Pious was almost a cleric on the throne. Six spiritual peers sat on the King's council. To abbots and bishops were entrusted the highest missions. Suger of Saint Denys governed the kingdom in the absence of Louis VII.

Without Subserviency.

But the result was not a clerical regime. The Church had temporalities, which made her vulnerable. She had given herself a protector: one can hardly expect a protector to remain obedient. Besides, the King's authority also had a religious character. He was the Lord's anointed, consecrated with holy Chrism; his coronation was an ordination.[1] Two factors enhanced this spiritual power of the French monarchy. The first was the personal prestige of Saint Louis. It cast a glamour upon the whole Capetian line. His descendants inherited the miraculous touch which could heal the King's Evil.[2] The second was the supremacy of the Parisian schools in theology. The University was not a royal institution; nor was it specifically French; but it could not be located in the royal capital without becoming associated in the public mind with the royal government. If we add that the Papacy was weakened by its tremendous conflict with the Empire, and later by the Great Schism, we realize how natural it was for the King to become the dominant partner in the association.

The latent conflict never came to a sharp test, as it did between Germany and Rome. His Most Christian Majesty remained a dutiful son, and never encroached on the spiritual prerogatives of the Holy Father. But he had his own way all the same. No French king was ever dethroned, or even seriously disturbed, at the instigation of a pope: the Interdict at the time of Philip-Augustus did not shake the King's power. But the popes, for seventy years, resided in Avignon, the instruments of the French monarchy. The King could levy large sums of money from the clergy, in the form of "gracious gifts" and "voluntary aids"; the *regale* gave him the income of vacant benefices; the *amortissement* compensated him for the *relief* or inheritance tax which the Church, a continuous corporation, did not have to pay. Ecclesiastical tribunals were allowed to grow: but the kings were able to set a limit to their development, to remove from their jurisdiction all purely civil or criminal cases, and to impose, in the last resort, the supremacy of their own council or parliament.

Gallicanism.

So complete, indeed, was the King's mastery over the national clergy that a separate establishment, independent from Rome, was not inconceivable. It was seriously considered during the Great Schism. The Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges in 1438 asserted, in very definite terms, "the liberties of the Gallican Church." But the French monarchy was not destined to carry its principles to their logical conclusion, as England did under Henry VIII. Anglicanism, although a *via media*, is a definite policy; Gallicanism is not even a compromise, but a contradiction, a way of "muddling through." This curious combination of defiant haggling with professed reverence, this proud and conditional submission to Rome, remained the constant attitude of Catholic France until the Revolution.

---

[1] Cf. the words of Jehan Gerson, 1391: "Pourtant, en conclusion, souverain roy des Chrétiens, roy sacerdotel, souverainement et divinement consacré, ne créez point dissencion contraire au sainct Esperit . . ."

[2] A scrofulous disease: the virtue passed to the English kings with their claims to the French throne; the Stuart pretenders and Charles X in 1824 were still believed to possess it.

§ 3. RELATIONS WITH FEUDALISM.

The monarchy represented, therefore, an ancient tradition as well as an increasing need. The King was the heir of the Franks and of imperial Rome, whose dual authority had finally united in the majesty of Charlemagne. The reviving world craved for order. The royal idea had been buried under the loose accumulation of feudal custom: but for the Church it would have been forgotten. When it started growing again, it had to feel its way, cautiously, deviously, through the interstices of feudalism; as it reached daylight, it seemed, and indeed it had become, part of the feudal mass through which it had forced its limbs. Only centuries later, when it had attained its full stature, did the true relation between the two appear: feudalism was but a heap of dead stones at the foot of monarchy.

Heredity Restored.

The first task of the kings in their upward struggle against stifling feudalism was to restore the principle of heredity. For a whole century the nobles had elected, now a Carolingian, now a Robertinian;[1] thus either race was prevented from taking root. The Capetians proceeded in the same manner as the feudal lords themselves: they had their successors appointed in their own lifetime. Louis VII was called the *Young*, because he was thus associated with his father Louis VI, the *Old King*. Bishops, canons, officials, German emperors, have all used that time-honoured method. It was a fortunate accident that, for three hundred years, the Capetians had sons. By the end of the twelfth century the Carolingians were forgotten, and heredity was acknowledged without demur. The crown went by right to the eldest son: the practice of dividing the kingdom, which had so weakened the Merovingians and the Carolingians, was abolished.

---

[1] From Robert the Strong, a valiant defender of the realm against the Normans.

Extension of the Royal Domain.

The second concern of the kings was to pacify and extend their personal domain, the real basis of their strength, so as to be in fact as well as in title first among their peers. The name *Francia*, which had once covered the vast territories of the Eastern and Western Franks, now shrank to denote a small duchy between Seine and Loire. Then it expanded again, with the growth of the monarchy, so as to mean all that Charles the Bald had held, and more. The souvenir of the great Carolingian France gave prestige to the King; but it was the actual strength of the King which gave reality to Capetian France: thus do "imponderables" and "blood and iron" eternally react upon each other. In this sense it may be said that France was, if not made, at least re-created by its dynasty.

Louis VI made himself master, by constant battling, in his own duchy, and his "long hands," in Suger's words, reached as far as Auvergne. Then, by marriage, conquest, inheritance, escheat, or purchase, began that patient piecing together of Capetian lands, which has been likened to the invincible and slow acquisitiveness of the French peasant proprietor.[1] This process was facilitated by the admirable strategic position of Paris and Orleans: had the Duke of Brittany been elected king instead of Hugh Capet, it is doubtful whether he could ever have given substance to his theoretical claims. The territorial increase went on under the worst kings: Philip VI, for instance, secured Montpellier and Dauphiny. But it suffered many a set-back. Louis VII, who had gained the splendid provinces of Guienne when he married Alienor, lost them when he repudiated her. Louis IX, with his chivalrous honesty, restored some of the conquests of his predecessors. The Plantagenet dominions, confiscated by Philip-Augustus in 1203, were recovered by

---

[1] Cf. Appendix: "Table of the French Provinces," with the date and method of their acquisition.

England during the Hundred Years' War. Through his blundering intrigues Louis XI lost valuable parts of the Burgundian dominions, and the Low Countries, which had been to a great extent within the French sphere of influence, were never fully restored to the French monarchy. If the kingdom was no longer divided at the death of a sovereign, large provinces were assigned to younger sons as apanages. Thus was a new Capetian feudalism created, as dangerous to French unity as the old local dynasties. The House of Burgundy, an offshoot of the Capetian trunk, struck an alliance with the English, and, under Charles the Bold, deliberately sought complete independence. These facts show that there was no such far-sightedness in the policy of the French kings as some of their modern apologists would have us believe. The kings *nearly* reached their goal—the reconstitution of France; but it took them seven centuries, and they wandered by way of Cressy and Agincourt. France is neither a natural unit, whose disrupted parts invincibly tended to gravitate together, nor, like the Hapsburg dominions, an aggregate of heterogeneous provinces with no other bond than a common dynasty. France is due to the patient collaboration of geography and history: the dim and slowly apprehended conception of a France gave prestige to the Capetians, the Capetians gave reality to the kingdom. Helping each other, the nation and the dynasty grew together: "la monarchie est le nationalisme intégral."

§ 4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE ROYAL DOMAIN.

In his personal domain the power of the King was patrimonial and feudal, exactly like that of any great baron. His territory was administered like any private estate. The King, like the other lords, had his local provosts—seventy-three of them in 1223—whose office, in many cases, had become a fief, or was farmed out to the highest bidder. No wonder that their rule was often tyrannical enough. The mere size of the King's domains necessitated a further step in organization: over the provosts were placed, at the time of Philip-Augustus, bailiffs, who at first were rather inspectors and itinerant justices than territorial officials. The bailiffs were appointed by the kings out of the lower nobility, or even of the bourgeoisie. They were functionaries in the modern sense, the distant ancestors of Richelieu's *Intendants* or of Napoleon's *Prefects.* In the provinces recently added to his domain, Philip-Augustus did not feel quite secure enough to introduce bailiffs of no local standing: he appointed instead seneschals who were members of the nobility.

Sundry Methods of Aggrandizement.

The annexation of new territory was not the only way in which the Capetian monarchy could spread its influence. Power naturally accrues to the strong: the monarchy had become a voracious living thing, drawing substance through a hundred tentacles. Thus estates, lay and particularly ecclesiastical, were placed under the royal *safeguard*: this meant new responsibilities, but also increased authority. The same result was obtained by means of *pariage*, or condominium: when the King was a partner in such an association, the reality of power was bound ultimately to be in his hands. Burghers, and particularly merchants, found it profitable to renounce their local master and place themselves directly under the protection of the King. No doubt the lords chafed at this curtailment of their privileges, but the King was already able to reply: *Quia nominor leo.* Many charters, granted by the lords, were countersigned and registered by the King, who thus became the national notary-public. He was, not unnaturally, given credit for granting liberties which he had merely confirmed, and to the present day Louis VI is still praised as the Protector and even as the Father of the French Communes. The growth of the royal domain made the King's coin current everywhere. The sound money of good King Saint Louis became a standard, soon abandoned, but unforgotten and long regretted. The advantages of a national system were so obvious that, for eleven years, Philip the Fair was able to suspend all minting operations except his own; and, in spite of the dishonesty with which he made use of this monopoly, the royal money kept gaining ground against its local rivals.

§ 5. EVOLUTION OF THE ARMY.

The same slow evolution from the feudal to the monarchical regime can be traced in the chief instrument of the King's power, the army. It was the privilege of a nobleman to bear arms and wage war in his own cause. Of this tradition the present French custom of settling an affair of honour by "exchanging two bullets without results" is the attenuated survival. This right of private warfare was one of the worst features of mediæval society. The King, in harmony with the Church, attempted to restrict the evil. Philip-Augustus required that a period of forty days should elapse between a challenge and actual hostilities: it was the King's Quarantine—la Quarantaine-le-Roi. Against any unfair advantage that one of the adversaries might attempt to secure in the meantime the parties were protected by the King's "assurance" (asseurement). Private war was also prohibited when the King himself was engaged on an expedition. These measures did not put an end to anarchy. Armed bandsmen remained a constant danger, and the great lords, individually or in leagues, were still able to defy their sovereign. But the royal domain, at any rate, was comparatively free from molestation.

The royal army was, therefore, not the only one that could be levied in the realm, and until the reign of Charles VII it remained feudal in character. Like any other suzerain, the King could call his vassals to arms, for a period which seldom exceeded forty days: it was the duty of *ost*. Among these vassals, as we have seen, were the cities with their militia. In addition to this feudal contingent, the King—again like any other lord—could have mercenaries: the practice was definitely established under Louis VI, and grew under Philip-Augustus. These hired fighters could be knights, retained in service beyond the time fixed by custom: Louis IX had to pay some of the barons who went with him to the crusade. From the mass of adventurers, camp-followers, fugitive serfs, highwaymen or "routiers" which infested the country, mercenary troops could be formed. These, of course, considered plunder as a legitimate addition to their precarious pay. They were treated by the nobles with the utmost contempt. At Cressy the knights of Philip VI rode to destruction over the bodies of their own Genoese archers. To find employment for these bands was one of the most perplexing problems that the monarchy had to face. Duguesclin took them down to Spain, exacting from the Pope a subsidy and his blessing as they marched past Avignon; but he could not keep them there. Finally, Charles VII organized, in 1445, fifteen "ordinance companies" of one hundred lances, i.e. six hundred men apiece, and he was able to enforce discipline among them. He also attempted to form a national reserve by ordering that, in each of the sixteen thousand parishes of the kingdom, one man should be specially trained in archery. But this nebulous army showed no military spirit whenever some of its units were called together. Louis XI preferred to rely upon foreign mercenaries. He had six thousand Swiss in his service, and part of his bodyguard was Scottish. Thus the feudal character of the army disappeared ; but its national character was still very indistinct. The army was a passive instrument in the hands of the King. The development of artillery sealed the fate of feudalism and assured the supremacy of the monarchy.

We have seen how the monarchy, in alliance with the Church, had developed within the feudal regime. So far as territory, administration, or the army were concerned, the King was not radically different from any of his great vassals. He had gradually overshadowed them all except the Duke of Burgundy ; still, he was only " first among his peers." But other principles were at work, not of feudal origin, antagonistic to feudalism. The first clear formulation of these, under Philip the Fair, marks the end of the Middle Ages properly so-called; their definite triumph, with Louis XI, heralds the opening of the modern era. It is the growth of these new influences that we shall now trace, in the development of the judicial, financial, and political institutions of the Capetian monarchy.

CHAPTER IX

THE ROYAL POWER: THE PARLIAMENT: THE STATES GENERAL: CULTURE

§ 1. Evolution of the Curia Regis.

Just as in the case of administration and military affairs, the monarchical system of justice and taxation grew slowly out of feudal conditions. It transformed these conditions without altogether superseding them. The logical term of the new principles was not reached until the end of the eighteenth century, when monarchy itself, having completed its task and created the nation, was discarded in its turn.

Mediæval justice applied different principles to the dependent population and to the feudal class. A villein was to be judged by his master, without appeal. A nobleman was to be judged by his peers, at the court of his suzerain. Justice was an attribute of sovereignty and a source of revenue; the King's did not at first essentially differ from that of a great baron. Like any other suzerain, he was entitled to the "counsel" of his vassals. Whenever and wherever the need was felt, he could summon to his court the officers of his household, the barons of his domain, and the highest lords, spiritual as well as temporal, of the kingdom.[1] They formed the *Curia Regis*, an organ both of government and justice.

But the royal domain was constantly expanding. King's men, wherever found, were amenable only to the King's tribunals; to his courts were also reserved a number of "royal cases." Appeals from feudal and ecclesiastical courts were multiplied. When a vassal felt himself wronged, either by " default of justice " or by " false judgment," he had, according to feudal practice, a right of appeal from his immediate lord to the latter's suzerain. The case might thus come before the ultimate suzerain, the King of France. The latter encouraged direct appeals to him, just as the Pope was making himself supreme over bishops and abbots by permitting direct appeals to Rome. The result of all this was to throw upon the King's court a volume of business with which that heterogeneous and loosely organized assembly could not cope. It was necessary to separate the Grand Council, an advisory body in matters political, from the Judicial Court, or Parliament. Under Philip the Fair the latter became permanent, with regular sessions and a fixed abode, the Palace of the City—henceforth in fact, if not yet in name, the Palace of Justice (1302).

---

[1] The very highest were the Peers of the Realm. Under the influence of ancient tradition, their number was fixed at twelve, six laymen, six ecclesiastics. Later the kings assumed the right of creating new peers. The peerage did not play any great part in French history, except when John Lackland was summoned before them, and, defaulting, was declared to have forfeited his estates.

§ 2. The Parliament of Paris.

This Parliament, representing the King in his judicial capacity, had jurisdiction over the whole of France. The Exchequer of Rouen and the Grand Days of Troyes were presided over by commissaries drawn from Parliament. But the process of differentiation continued. A special chamber had to be set apart for the cases from the south, judged according to Roman law. A Chamber of Accounts was created, supreme in financial matters. Then a number of provincial parliaments came into existence. But the Parliament of Paris, subdivided into several chambers, retained its primacy.

A Legal Class.

The barons admitted to the Curia Regis had no inclination to adjudge the many cases brought before that court. They preserved their rights to sit in Parliament, but, as a matter of fact, their places were filled by men of humbler birth and greater knowledge, who specialized in the work. This change in personnel caused a complete change in the method and spirit of the court. In feudal practice a trial was in fact a challenge, the judicial duel was admitted as a solution, and the lord sat merely as an umpire. The King's judges substituted for that rough and ready method the written procedure which they had learned from the ecclesiastical courts. A less desirable practice was borrowed from the same source: it seems that the adoption of torture as a means of obtaining confession was due to the influence of the Inquisition.

Out of feudal barbarism was thus rising again the idea of impersonal law. It should be noted, however, that there is no such thing as a mediæval code. The Institutions of Saint Louis are an unofficial compilation, made by some unknown practitioner about 1273. Louis XI is credited with a desire to have the law of the land put into one book. This is consonant with his centralizing tendency; but the wish was not even a velleity. Broadly speaking, France remained divided into Langue d'Oc and Langue d'Oil, with their diverse traditions. In Langue d'Oc, Roman, or, as it was called, *written* law, prevailed; in Langue d'Oil, custom, which varied with each district. One of the most instructive books of the thirteenth century is Beaumanoir's Custom of Beauvaisis. The ordinances of the King were law throughout the land.

New Principles.

This rise of a professional legal class, after reacting upon the procedure, affected the monarchy itself. The relation of these men to the King was not feudal; they saw in him not a suzerain, but a sovereign. They were influenced by ecclesiastical traditions, and by that Roman law, which the University of Bologna had so brilliantly revived. The theories of the *legists* under Philip the Fair pave the way for the monarchy of Louis XIV. According to them, the source of law is to be found, not in custom or contract, but in the person of the sovereign, who, as the embodiment of the State, is the living law. As a distant consequence, it is plain that all local and personal distinctions should disappear in the eyes of the law: there should be but one law, as there should be but one faith and one king: "Une foi, une loi, un roi." This does not mean, however, the tyranny of caprice. The king is bound by the traditions of his office, which themselves are essentially one, in the minds of the legists, with the great traditions of Roman law, the fruit of experience and reason. In the same way, the Pope's authority, although absolute, is defined by the Canons of the Church.

Semi-Political Power of Parliament.

The legal traditions of the monarchy are preserved by the judicial courts, and particularly by the Parliament of Paris. If any ordinance be contrary to the spirit of these traditions, the Parliament can refuse to register it, and offer a "remonstrance" on the subject. Thus the perpetual secretary of the undying Sovereign feels empowered to warn and guide the actual bearer of the sceptre. In case of conflict, the judges, like the Church and the University, could even resort to a strike. The King's sovereign decision, however, if insisted upon, was final, and the registration of an edict or ordinance could be forced upon Parliament. Thus arose the semi-political authority of the judiciary, not unlike the constitutional power of the Supreme Court of the United States. With this legal doctrine were mixed distorted memories of the Carolingian assemblies—with which, as a matter of fact, Parliament had nothing in common. Needless to say that this brief presentation simplifies and hardens a long and not wholly conscious process. It was the Constituent Assembly, nearly five hundred years later, which drew the conclusions from the premises of King Philip's legists.[1]

§ 3. FINANCES.

The financial resources of the kings were also not different from those of the feudal lords. They were made up of the revenue from the personal domain, and the dues or "aids" that could be required from the vassals. But the needs of the monarchy increased even faster than the domain. King Philip the Fair in particular is famous for the precarious condition of his finances. The great money powers, Jews, Lombards, Templars, were mercilessly pressed; the

---

[1] In this respect again, the reign of St. Louis marks a passing moment of balance and harmony between the feudal and the monarchical principles. The King was extremely careful not to encroach upon the jurisdiction of his vassals. Once, disturbed by some noise, he first enquired to whom belonged the "justice" of the place; and only when he was assured that it was his own did he order the noise-makers to be quiet. He sat personally as a judge, in patriarchal fashion: the picture of good King St. Louis dealing justice under an oak at Vincennes is one of the most pleasing that the Middle Ages can offer us. He was somewhat behind the times in his conception of the royal power; but his renown for equity helped the monarchy more than the theories of the legists.

Church did not escape. The weight, fineness, or nominal value of the currency were repeatedly altered : no lasting profit could be expected from these malpractices ; they are an evidence of the hand-to-mouth policy of that puzzling reign. It was the military establishment which offered the best opportunities for exacting taxes: King Philip was reminded by his advisers that, according to Merovingian custom, all men, excepting only the beggars, could be drafted for the defence of the realm. Now the Church, the cities, and even a number of nobles, preferred to redeem themselves from such service by a cash payment. This gave the needy prince a pretext for another turn of the fiscal screw.

It was not without a long struggle, however, that a permanent system of non-feudal taxation was established. Charles V, " wise " as he was, abolished on his death-bed the imposts he had created, feeling qualms of conscience about their legitimacy. It was not until the reign of Charles VII, in 1439, that the land-tax became permanent ; and throughout the ancient regime the monarchy was only able to collect non-feudal taxation by exempting the feudal class from the greater part of the burden. In the course of that struggle France came very near evolving representative institutions, with full control of the purse-strings. As in 1789—and as it yet shall be—the Government's financial difficulties were the people's political opportunities.

The States General under Philip the Fair.

For a vassal to assist his lord with his counsel was held to be both a right and a duty. As the cities assumed the privileges of baronies, they, too, had to be consulted by their suzerain, even by the King. As early as 1080 there had taken place at Narbonne a great assembly uniting the deputies of the cities with the prelates and the barons. When, in 1302, Philip the Fair called together the three estates of the kingdom, it was not felt that an unprecedented step had been taken. On that occasion his purpose was to enlist their support in his struggle with Boniface VIII ; in 1308 he wanted to suppress the Templars : but in neither case was there any discussion or opposition. The delegates had been selected to hear the King's pleasure. In 1313 at last the financial question was uppermost. The Third Estate voted the " aids " which the King required for his Flemish campaign. The nobility and the clergy abstained.[1]

There was, no doubt, in the States General a promising germ. The patrimonial and feudal system of the French monarchy could not be changed into a national regime without new taxes. Now, the fundamental principle, "No taxation without representation," was clearer in the mediæval mind than to the contemporaries of Louis XIV. Custom or consent: the suffrage of the dead or the vote of the living; beyond that, men of the fourteenth century had a keen sense of tyranny, and were ready to resist.

§ 4. The States General and the Hundred Years' War.

The disasters of the Hundred Years' War gave them their opportunity. John II had to call the States together in 1351, 1355, and 1356. After his defeat and capture at Poitiers affairs assumed a revolutionary turn. The three orders were in unison against the King's incapacity, the cowardice of the Dauphin, the wastefulness of the royal Government. Etienne Marcel, Provost of the Merchants of Paris, Robert Le Coq, Bishop of Laon, Jehan of Picquigny, spokesman of the nobility, took the head. The Dauphin, with the support of the King's council, evaded their demands. But, in 1357, the situation had grown so threatening that he had to give in. The Grand Ordinance of the 3rd March 1357 was a veritable Magna Charta. The States would meet even without royal summons. No taxes were to be collected, except those voted by the States. The currency was to be sound and invariable. Military service for the defence of the realm was compulsory for every Frenchman. The right of private war was suspended. The members of the Grand Council, Parliament, and Chamber of Accounts were sharply called to task for their delays. Provostships could no longer be sold or farmed out.

Unfortunately, such a transformation of the royal power was impossible unless the King were either very weak or very bold. The Dauphin was only Lieutenant of the Kingdom; he was physically timid, intellectually limited. He lacked the energy and the vision which such a situation required. But he had enough pertinacity and cunning to thwart and finally defeat Etienne Marcel. The latter was driven to revolutionary methods; he allied himself with the Jacques and with Charles the Bad, King of Navarre. The nobility, the clergy, the more substantial bourgeoisie abandoned his cause, the Jacques were annihilated, Charles the Bad could not be relied upon. The great provost, isolated, despairing, was finally murdered (1st of August 1358), and the few meetings of the States General in the lifetime of Charles V were very tame affairs indeed.

---

[1] As a rule, the States General of Langue d'Oil and those of Langue d'Oc were convened separately, even when they met in the same city. In addition to the States General, there were a number of regional States.

The reign of Charles VI, the mad King, was even more disastrous than that of John the Good. This new collapse of the monarchy once more brought the States General to the fore. In 1413 the assembly was dominated by the butchers, the "Cabochiens"; a new Grand Ordinance was forced upon the then Dauphin, the future Charles VII, on the 24th of May 1413. It never was applied; but it shows that the people of Paris at any rate had a clear sense of the principles of constitutional government.

The truncated assemblies under Charles VII were of little importance until 1439, when the States met at Orleans. There had been a splendid revival of national consciousness, as revealed in Joan of Arc's miraculous career. The representatives of the people rallied round the monarchy, unconditionally, so as to complete the work of liberation and reconstruction. To the King alone was given the right of levying troops, and by way of consequence, of collecting *tailles* and *aides* for military purposes. This led to the establishment of a permanent army and of permanent taxation. In their misguided patriotism the States General had cut the ground from under their feet. That fatal decision could never be recalled. During the reigns of Charles VII and Louis XI the assemblies were few and submissive. Louis XI preferred a meeting of hand-picked notables to the States General. In 1484, during the minority of Charles VIII, a last effort was made. Those States were the first which gave a hearing to the organized "fourth estate," the peasantry. The delegates were divided into "nations," i.e. regions—France, Burgundy, Normandy, Aquitaine, Languedoc, Provence; and within each nation the vote of a commoner was equal to that of a noble or cleric. Taxation was voted for two years only; the States were to meet regularly every second year. The Regent, Anne de Beaujeu, promised everything; but Charles VIII reigned for fourteen years, and the States were never called. The game was lost, and the French monarchy had become absolute.

§ 5. Comparison with England.

It is impossible not to wonder why the fate of England and that of France should have been so different. From 1215 England enjoyed fundamental rights which France did not secure—precariously even then—until 1789. Any explanation based on racial differences must be brushed aside. In the thirteenth century both Roman and Anglo-Saxon traditions had been thickly overgrown with new customs, and a French-speaking aristocracy took a leading part in the conquest of English liberties.

The first obvious difference is that, after 1066, the kings of England were so powerful as to threaten the privileges of all classes, which therefore united in resisting them; in France it was not the Capetians whose tyranny was feared, but the aristocracy. Broadly, the monarchy stood for order, the barons for oppressive anarchy. So the clergy and the people, on the whole, supported the King. The barons resisted; there was hardly any reign without some feudal rebellion. But they never had a clear case against him, because the growth of his power was so gradual, and because that power was based on feudal principles as well as on historical claims and military force.

Once at least, in 1357, the inefficiency of the royal government did in France what the excessive power of the King had done in England: all orders united to demand reform. But the second essential difference between the two destinies became manifest. Behind the inviolate sea England could settle her constitutional problems in safety. France was always affected by the presence of a foreign enemy on her soil, or by the dread of invasion. Yielding, yet tenacious, Charles V proved to be quietly, almost passively, efficient in driving the English out of France: all was forgiven. For the same reason Charles VII was able to obtain all he wanted. It is difficult to set one's house in order whilst it is on fire, and it seems ungracious to haggle with the power which seems to be the very palladium of national existence.[1]

---

[1] The same principle holds good in our own days; England and America were able to go on with reforms of a thoroughgoing character during the Great War: the thoughts of France were engrossed by the fact of invasion.

The struggle for political rights proved abortive for another and less creditable reason. The nobles and the clergy did not co-operate heartily with the Third Estate, because they remained exempt from the land tax and preserved many other privileges. The upper bourgeoisie were inclined to support the King, because he maintained order against the barons, and because his power was, to an ever-increasing extent, exercised through members of their own class. The common people were not represented at all: it was at their expense that the unworthy compromise was struck. Thus caste selfishness, as much at least as national spirit, contributed to the supremacy of the King.

§ 6. The Monarchy and Culture.

Not a Dominant Factor.

Subsequent events have proved to us that, long before the close of the Middle Ages, the monarchy had won the day, and was to be the dominant factor in national life. This was by no means so evident to contemporaries. At the time of Francis I, and particularly under Louis XIV, the King's court will be by a long way the chief centre of politics, society, and culture. No ambitious nobleman, artist, or writer can afford wholly to ignore the Sovereign Presence. There is nothing of the kind under Philip-Augustus or Saint Louis. The King lived like a great baron—at times with rather less magnificence than some of his vassals. The court of Toulouse was in the twelfth century more brilliant than that of Paris. Champagne, in the thirteenth, did not yield the palm of culture to Isle-de-France. The contrast has often been drawn between the splendour of the Burgundian dukes and the mean estate of Louis XI at Plessis-lès-Tours. The notes in the early epic that have a genuine national ring are extremely rare: the inspiration of these poems is feudal and Christian rather than monarchical. When Joinville wrote his charming reminiscences of Louis IX, it was the friend, the saint, and the knight that he had in mind rather than the sovereign.

Charles V.

The first adumbration of a "royal culture" can be discerned under Charles V, the weak-bodied, pensive, and successful king. He spared neither care nor expense in collecting his library, which was to grow into the glorious and unwieldy Bibliothèque Nationale. He sought out the best scholars in his realm, and rewarded them richly with ecclesiastical preferment. Thus was Nicole Oresme commissioned to translate Aristotle, and made Bishop of Lisieux.[1] Christine de Pisan was the daughter of the King's astrologer and physician, whom he had called from Venice on the strength of his European reputation. Bereft of father, husband, and kingly protector, debarred by her sex from the Church benefices with which it was customary to recognize scholarly merit, Christine became the first professional "femme de lettres" in French history. She preserved a feeling of deep gratitude for her father's friend and master, and in 1403–4 wrote her "Book of the Deeds and Manners of the Wise King, Charles V." If hatred of the invader be a test of patriotism, few poets were more patriotic than Eustache Deschamps, who reviled the English in numberless ballads. Eustache was a moralist inclined to moroseness, but in his universal pessimism, he excepted two men whom he sincerely admired, Duguesclin and Charles V. The honourable career of the famous Breton Constable—a series of checks and failures patiently retrieved, and more successful in the end than flashy victories—inspired Cuvelier to write a belated Chanson de Geste in 22,000 lines, with Duguesclin for a hero. "Of the author," says M. Ch. V. Langlois, "nothing is known, except that he had no talent for poetry."

Alain Chartier.

Alain Chartier was attached to the Dauphin—the future Charles VII—as royal secretary; he followed him through the dismal years when the legitimate heir was but the derided "King of Bourges." In the darkest hour he wrote his "Book of Hope," and he hailed the miraculous salvation that came through Joan of Arc. Alain, a vigorous orator in prose and verse rather than a poet, was called "the Father of French Eloquence." He was a sort of laureate, and his fame, immense in his lifetime, remained undimmed for nearly a century: dare we promise the same span of life to the work of our laureates, Paul Fort and Robert Bridges?

---

[1] Oresme was the author of a very curious treatise on money, *De Origine, Natura, Jure et Mutationibus Monetarum.*

"And after that the dark": all that is remembered about him now is the kiss of Princess Marguerite—a pretty story which is most probably a myth. Chartier's official literature was talented and sincere: yet there is more patriotic appeal in the two simple lines of the vagabond rhymester:

> "Et Jehanne, la bonne Lorraine,
> Qu'Anglais brûlèrent à Rouen . . .[1]

Commines.

The name of Philip van den Clyte, sire of Commines, is inseparable from that of Louis XI, whom he served and whose life he told. Louis has often been called the first in date of modern kings, and "the forerunner of Richelieu": his foreign secretary and chronicler likewise is considered as the earliest of political historians in the French language. Both these claims are open to dispute. There is little more genuine national feeling in Commines than in Froissart. He betrayed Charles the Bold of Burgundy and entered the service of Louis XI, not because the King stood for the unity and greatness of France, but because he was a more congenial and appreciative master. As an artist Commines is vastly inferior to Froissart. His style is dry and cumbrous. He lacks picturesqueness: the fanciful and obsolete trappings of chivalry do not exist in his eyes. But whilst Froissart saw little beneath the glitter of arms and the waving of plumes, Commines attempts to analyze the motives of his characters and evinces no mean penetration. His book has a still higher purport: it is a Manual of Politics, by one who had plied the trade and worked under a rare master: the Emperor Charles V made it "his Breviary," and Commines has been dubbed a French Macchiavelli. As political philosophers it seems that both Commines and his sovereign have been overrated. There is no sign of a guiding principle in their conduct, and no quality of a higher degree than cunning. Louis XI's intrigues, in which he so greatly rejoiced, piled up difficulties for him as well as for his adversaries; he was repeatedly checkmated; he wasted magnificent opportunities; and his final achievements, taken as a whole, were far less brilliant than those of Charles VII. In the same way, Commines's counsels of ruse often strike us as commonplace, petty, and inadequate. He had to drag in Providence at every turn, not out of hypocrisy, still less out of simple faith, but out of sheer intellectual helplessness, because his cunning was not commensurate with the course of history.

---

[1] Pierre Gringoire (or Gringore) is chiefly known as a delightful caricature in Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame*. In reality he, too, was an official poet, who wrote an anti-papal play, *La Sotie du Prince des Sots*, at the request of King Louis XII—1512.

§ 7. Officialdom the Steadying Factor in the Growth of the Capetian Monarchy.

The same verdict might be passed upon the Capetian dynasty as a whole. The development of monarchical out of feudal France was not an harmonious growth, but a confused process, in which neither logic nor idealism can serve as guides. The kings were too often unworthy instruments. They were served by the faults of their rivals, and even by the misfortune of their own country, rather than by their personal virtues or their foresight. Nor can any measure of optimistic fatalism justify the belief that the result was the best that France deserved.

The Capetian monarchy was, as we have seen, a complex of heterogeneous elements—Roman and Frankish, patrimonial, feudal, theocratic and national. Ill-defined, inefficiently checked, it was apt to be suddenly swerved in its course by individual caprice. The steadying factor which kept the royal Government fairly true to the permanent interests of France was the growing body of officials. These men had traditions and principles. Their relation to the King was not feudal: in serving him, they were conscious of serving the State. The Legists of Philip the Fair, the Marmosets of Charles the Wise, the administrators of Charles VII and Louis XI were the true organizers of France. They were the substance of a power of which the monarchy was but the form. The traditional government of France is not autocracy, nor aristocracy, still less theocracy, and least of all democracy: it is middle class bureaucracy.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

§ 1. DOWNFALL OF MEDIÆVAL CIVILIZATION.

MEDIÆVAL civilization, according to such authorities as Gaston Pâris and Professor Emerton, died early in the fourteenth century. Saint Louis was the last of the genuine Crusaders (1270). Boniface VIII was brutally awakened from his theocratic dreams (1303); soon the Papacy would be "captive in Babylon" (1309). The principle of serfhood, one of the pillars of the mediæval structure, was denounced as anti-natural by King Louis X in 1315. Gothic architecture, the communal movement, the guild system, had all passed their point of perfection. The University of Paris was in decadence; scholasticism was falling from Thomas Aquinas to Duns Scot. The Christian and feudal epic was a degraded shadow; even the Romance of Chivalry had lost much of its charm. On the other hand, the Royal Power was asserting and organizing itself. The Parliament of Paris was now controlled by professional jurists. The Legists were formulating new principles of government. The States General had been convened. Artillery was soon to place in the hands of the monarchy an instrument which meant the political downfall of the Fighting Caste. The world seemed ready for a new era. Unfortunately, Mediæval Civilization was not aware of its own demise; it lingered on, an uneasy ghost, for nearly two hundred years.

In other words, man had slowly reared, during the Dark and the Middle Ages, a fortress of traditions. When it was completed, this mass of prejudices and customs was, not a shelter, but a prison. Heaven itself was all but shut out by a thick dome of scholasticism and superstition. By the end of the thirteenth century its cement of faith and force had disintegrated, and the whole fabric was ready to crumble down. But the tenants were still mistaking their gaol for the universe, and hiding the cracks in the walls under fantastic tapestries. In the second half of the fifteenth century the light could no longer be kept out. The Great Schism and the fall of Constantinople had made it patent that the Christian Commonwealth was shattered. The invention of the printing press, the vertiginous adventures of the Portuguese and of the Spaniards, suddenly expanded man's horizon. Europe stepped deliberately out of the ruins; she gazed with wonder on the world; she recognized many features which, dimly comprehending, she had read of in ancient books. This discovery of a larger universe, coloured by Greco-Roman culture, was the Renaissance.

If we admit the principle of "self-determination" for historical periods as well as for nationalities, there was a very definite break between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The leaders of the new era were exultingly conscious of a change. The words of Raoul Glaber would apply more truly than they did in the eleventh century: the world was indeed "shedding the rags of its antiquity and clothing itself anew." Reason rather than Dogma; Monarchy rather than Feudalism; the dynastic State instead of the Catholic Commonwealth; the Pagan canon of Mediterranean art instead of the Christian tradition of the Celto-Teutonic north-west: such was the Neo-Classical synthesis. Naturally, the new age misunderstood and despised the old; the consciousness of difference easily degenerates into hostility, and frontiers would have little meaning if they were not potential battle-lines. The Renaissance waged a war of extermination against the Middle Ages. The literature of the last four centuries fell into disrepute and oblivion; the Mysteries were even suppressed by law. Greco-Roman portals were clapped on to ogival churches as a mask of respectability. The very word Gothic was coined as a term of reproach.

§ 2. SURVIVAL OF MEDIÆVALISM THROUGHOUT THE CLASSICAL AGE.

We need hardly say that the boundary between the two cultures was not so sharply drawn in the realm of facts as in the opinion of men. The germs of Neo-Classicism existed in the Middle Ages; mediæval elements survived to the very end of the classical period. Reason overshadowed but could never absorb theology: Thomas Aquinas remained watching by the side of Descartes. Absolute monarchy triumphed in appearance; but Turgot and the other believers in enlightened despotism found out that the King's pleasure was held in check by thirteenth-century fossils: the fiscal immunities of the nobility and of the clergy, the historical rights of certain provinces, the sullen inertia of the parliaments, the obsolete statutes of the guilds. It was the mission of the Revolution not to reverse, but to fulfil the policy of the classical age by destroying the last vestiges of mediævalism: traces of the feudal regime lingered until the 4th of August 1789.

The Revolution and the Romantic Reaction.

The Convention enthroned Reason, Law, and the Nation instead of Tradition, Privilege, and the Dynasty. In important respects, this was but the dream of Philip the Fair, Louis XI, and Louis XIV realized at last; but the classical world shuddered at this ruthless application of its own principles. The reaction which was bound to follow attempted therefore to reintroduce mediævalism into modern culture. Such was the cause that Chateaubriand, and after him Thierry, Hugo, Michelet, served so brilliantly. This reaction gave a false antiquarian tinge to a curious phase of Romanticism. Chivalry was in flower again, and "ogival" became a term of superlative praise. But the movement was only half sincere, and by 1830 the leaders of French thought were looking forward again.

§ 3. THE MIDDLE AGES AND MODERN FRENCH POLITICS.

So the Middle Ages became quaintly entangled in modern French politics. Even to-day, in a valuable book like M. Dimier's *Les Préjugés Hostiles à l'Histoire de France,*[1] we can detect the note of propaganda in favour of L'Action Française and of "integral nationalism," which, being interpreted, means the Duke of Orleans. After all, the student of history will cheerfully welcome this paradoxical state of affairs. Propaganda and counter-propaganda are not science; but they keep interest alive in historical questions, and their narrow searchlight rays from opposite sides bring out certain facts with bolder relief than disinterested research could hope to achieve. The Renaissance had consigned the Middle Ages to oblivion; the Revolution had condemned the Ancient Regime as a tissue of injustice and absurdity; against such partisan verdicts, the protest of the Romanticists and of their Neo-Royalist successors was justified. It has helped the French to regain a sense of the continuity of their history—of all history. It has made them realize that their ancestors were not all fools and knaves. The gain is clear: mediævalism in France has remained purely an æsthetic ideal; it has not led to the revival of any obsolete institution or policy. Would the same had been true on the other side of the Rhine!

---

[1] Cf. also Prof. Jean Guiraud: *Histoire Partiale, Histoire Vraie.*

There are signs that the interminable battle about the Middle Ages is losing some of its bitterness—probably because it has lost much of its meaning. The Revolution of 1789 is now the Ancient Regime; ultra-conservatives are already using the Rights of Man as their palladium. A new revolution, which had been brewing in England for nearly a hundred years, burst upon the world about the middle of the nineteenth century. It substituted the philosophy of evolution for the static rationalism of the period; it discarded classicism and romanticism alike for realism: a tremendous scientific and industrial advance called imperiously for a revaluation of all values. Property, the Nation, the political State, have to meet its challenge. For the men of 1920, absorbed in such issues, Louis-Philippe seems hardly less remote than Philip-Augustus.[1] We are no longer tempted to be unfair to the Middle Ages. Indeed, we are more likely to show partiality for the age of the Crusaders rather than for the Bourgeois monarchy. All fossils are interesting, but all are not equally picturesque. Besides, we prefer those that are quite dead.

§ 4. HETEROGENEITY OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

The impression we have been attempting to convey in this sketch of the Middle Ages is one of complexity. This impression is submitted with diffidence: it is not orthodox, and it was not the first that arose in the author's mind. In the perspective of half a millennium, mediæval civilization appeared simple and harmonious enough, compared with the tangle and darkness through which we are groping to-day. Such is the virtue of remoteness that, five hundred years hence, some scholar may write a book on: "Versailles, Washington, and Moscow: a Study of Twentieth-Century Unity."[1] A closer view failed to confirm this sense of unity: indeed, it created bewilderment. Our material civilization is more elaborate, no doubt: this does not mean that our culture is essentially more complex. It matters little whether a message be sent through a herald, as in earliest times, or that it be flashed by wireless: the message is the thing.

---

[1] In the spring of 1918 the author was visiting the pretty feudal and Renaissance château of St. Aignan; his guide told him, in his most impressive tone: "It is very ancient: it must have been built under Louis-Philippe!" Anachronisms of five hundred years are not rare in folk-lore and in college examination papers.

The Three Elements.

There is every reason why the culture of the Middle Ages should be, not more, but far less homogeneous than ours. In the course of the fourth and fifth centuries three elements had been violently thrown together: the tradition of Pagan and Imperial Rome, Christianity, and a flood of Barbarians. The result was chaos. Out of this chaos the mediæval world "now half appeared, pawing to get free his hinder parts," like Milton's lion. The Renaissance introduced no new principle. Through the irresistible agency of time the three elements have become more intimately blended. The old antinomies still exist;[2] but they are not so glaring as seven hundred years ago. Europe is finding herself and progressing towards genuine unity.

Endless Variety of Mediæval Christianity.

It was Christianity that cemented together the ruins of the ancient world and the rough-hewn blocks of Teutonic barbarism. Christianity was embodied in the Church, and the constant dream of the Church, her sole *raison d'être,* has been unity. All attempts at material unity proved abortive in the Middle Ages; the theocratic ideal of

---

[1] Cf. Henry Adams, "*Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres: A Study of Thirteenth-Century Unity.*"

[2] William II was an almost perfect example of mediæval heterogeneity: Teutonic barbarism, Christianity, Roman imperialism, all floating in a mist of make-believe.

Gregory VII failed almost as lamentably as the imperial ideal of the Hohenstaufen. What about spiritual unity, the only one that deserves the name? Christianity was supreme, no doubt, but mediæval Christianity was not one. Not only was it Protean in outward appearance: the Carthusian ascetic, the mendicant, the political abbot, like Suger, the feudal bishop, the schoolman, and the Templar, are a picturesque and varied gallery; but these many forms were not the manifestations of the same soul. By the side of mysticism we find an ecclesiasticism which had donned the garments and been infected with the spirit of Pagan Rome; a rationalism which attempted to co-ordinate Aristotle and Holy Writ; among the masses, a teeming polytheism, a rank fetishism, an unblushing worship of images and relics. When it reached the West, Christianity had become a mass of contradictions. A universal faith, it trailed with it the Jewish Bible, the embodiment of fierce tribal pride. An Oriental religion, charged with the subtlety of the Alexandrian intellect, the fruit of an ancient, over-refined culture, it was suddenly turned over to eager but rough children. A religion of other-worldliness and superhuman perfection, it had to be adjusted to the habits of life of very solid and choleric barbarians. Never was such syncretism concealed under one holy name. So the very essence of the Christian spirit, meekness and love, negated the foundations of the feudal world, which were force and pride.

Childishness of the Mediæval Mind.

We are at home in ancient culture. Cicero would naturally take his seat in the front bench of the House of Commons. The Middle Ages are remote and strange. After we have mastered their language, we are still disconcerted by the unaccountable flight of their thought. They pass from the secular to the spiritual plane, from sober fact to allegory, from reason to custom, from charity to ferocity, from childishness to decadent subtlety, with bewildering suddenness. It may be that we have lost their secret: the most consistent thinker among us is apt to be a puzzle for men with a totally different set of prejudices. The more obvious explanation is that the Middle Ages were simply immature. There is hardly any trait of mediæval psychology that is not found in the children of to-day. Trust and effusive affection, with streaks of cruelty, selfishness, and violence; vagueness in essentials, coupled with painful literalness and formalism (what child will tolerate the slightest deviation from precedent in the wording of a fairy tale?); implicit faith in authority, and no desire to draw a sharp line between sober fact and make-believe: all these elements existed in the mediæval cloister as they exist in the modern nursery. Self-control and the critical sense were undeveloped. Individuals were not deficient in reasoning power, strength of purpose, or ripe experience: there were magnificent personalities in the Middle Ages. But the *Zeitgeist* was crude.

§ 5. Appeal of the Middle Ages.

If we liken the mediæval to the childish mind, much affection is lurking beneath the criticism. Monks and barons were big naughty children at times: yet how jolly and fascinating! The Quest, the Crusades and the Tourney, without forgetting the gloomy keep and its torture-chamber, will long entrance the Eternal Boy. We greyheads may have outgrown the simple romance of mediæval chivalry; but we like to dream of the days when the mind of our race was young.

And there is a deeper appeal in mediæval civilization than picturesque adventure. We have but recently emerged from the classical period; our progress has not brought us back to the Middle Ages, but it enables us to look upon them with more sympathetic insight. Many sincere thinkers feel cramped within the narrow boundaries of the national state: as an ideal they would prefer the Christian Commonwealth of the twelfth century to the "sacred egoism" of Prussia in the nineteenth. Feudalism, said Guizot, was the confusion of property and authority: are we not coming to realize that such a confusion is inherent in the facts? In spite of all political contrivances, property still does confer authority. We may settle the problem by other means than the Middle Ages; but we are no longer able to deny its existence, and to assert that rich and poor wield equal power in a democracy. The feudal conception of property as a trust, creating a bond of service, is more acceptable to many progressive minds than the eighteenth-century doctrine of property as an abstract, unlimited right.

Spiritual Greatness.

The Middle Ages conceived, if they could not realize, the unity of culture on a spiritual basis. Human learning was frankly subordinated to Revelation, as indeed it should be, if Revelation be divine. The Middle Ages strove and failed ; the classical era gave up the attempt. The Renaissance only half-emancipated the secular mind ; it fostered reason and science, whilst still rendering lip-service to theology. Because we have served two masters, our faith has lost in substance and our civilization in spiritual light. We shall have to return to the mediæval idea that priest and scientist should be one and the same. We may reinterpret the very concept of Revelation, widen it so as to include the sum total of man's achievements, and make it once more the corner-stone of our culture. A new Auguste Comte may yet be our Thomas Aquinas.

The Middle Ages, as we have said, strove for unity in vain. Perhaps their failure is the essence of their appeal. They failed because this world of flesh and the world of spirit, within us, beyond us, could not be harmonized : but at least they were conscious of the spirit. In many ways, crude and childish, or magnificently allegorical, they expressed their boundless yearning, the *acedia* of the soul in prison. Sound work requires faith in a solid world. Yet in days of elation or despair we cannot but feel the heaven trembling, as though it would roll together like a scroll. The experience is rare and fleeting ; but so long as its memory endures, rationalism and classicism shrink in our sight, and we are once again in the heart of the Middle Ages.

THE END

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In his experience with American university students, the author has found the following books particularly useful. The list, of course, could be indefinitely extended; but most of the works mentioned below contain good bibliographies. The books marked with an asterisk form an inexpensive reference library for elementary purposes.

I. GENERAL

A. RAMBAUD: Histoire de la Civilisation Française.* 2 vols. 18°. Colin, Paris. (Constantly reprinted and kept up-to-date.)

E. LAVISSE (General Editor): Histoire de France Illustrée. 18 vols. Hachette, Paris. A model of "integral history." Includes (vol. i) VIDAL DE LA BLACHE: Tableau Géographique.*

II. LITERATURE

PETIT DE JULLEVILLE (General Editor): Histoire de la Littérature Française des Origines à 1900. Vols. i and ii. Le Moyen Age. Colin, Paris.

G. LANSON: Histoire de la Littérature Française.* Hachette, Paris. (Constantly reprinted.)

G. PARIS: La Littérature Française au Moyen Age.* Hachette, Paris.

—— Esquisse Historique de la Littérature Française au Moyen Age.* Colin.

III. ART AND ARCHÆOLOGY

L. HOURTICQ: Histoire de l'Art (Collection Ars Una: La France).* 16°. Hachette, Paris.

JOSEPH DECHELETTE: Manuel d'Archéologie Préhistorique, Celtique et Gallo-Romaine. 3 vols. 8°. Paris, Picard, 1908 seq.

CAMILLE ENLART: Manuel d'Archéologie Française: I. Architecture Religieuse. II. Architecture Civile et Militaire. III. Costume. 8°. Picard, Paris, 1902–16.

Emile Mâle: L'Art Religieux au XIIIème Siècle en France. Third edition, 4°. Colin, 1910.

—— L'Art Religieux de la Fin du Moyen Age en France. 4°. Colin, 1908.

IV. Economic Conditions

E. Levasseur: Histoire des Classes Ouvrières et de l'Industrie en France avant 1789. 2 vols. 8°. Rousseau, Paris, 1900–01.

—— Histoire du Commerce de la France. Tome I: Avant 1789. 8°. Rousseau, Paris, 1911.

G. d'Avenel: Histoire Économique de la Propriété, des Salaires, des Denrées et de tous les Prix en Général, depuis 1200 jusqu'en 1800. 6 vols. E. Leroux.

—— La Fortune Privée à Travers Sept Siècles. 18°. Colin.

—— Paysans et Ouvriers Depuis Sept Cents Ans. 18°. Colin.

—— Les Riches Depuis Sept Cents Ans. 18°. Colin.

—— Découvertes d'Histoire Sociale. 18°. Flammarion.

—— Le Nivellement des Jouissances. 18°. Flammarion.

(The last five works are a popular abridgment of the Histoire Economique.)

G. Fagniez: Etudes sur l'Industrie et la Classe Industrielle à Paris au XIIIème et au XIVème Siècles. 8°. Vieweg, Paris, 1877.

V. Society and Culture

Samuel Dill: Roman Society in the last Century of the Western Empire. Second edition 8°. Macmillan, 1910. (A perfect model of social history.)

Ch. V. Langlois: La Vie en France au Moyen Age, d'après quelques Moralistes du Temps. 16°. Hachette, 1908.

—— La Société Française au XIIIème Siècle, d'après Dix Romans d'Aventure. 16°. Hachette, 1904.

—— La Connaissance de la Nature et du Monde au Moyen Age. 16°. Hachette. (These convenient source-books are composed of well-selected passages, with scholarly introductions; the text, although modernized, requires some knowledge of old French.)

A. Luchaire: La Société Française au Temps de Philippe-Auguste.* 8°. Hachette, 1909. (A fascinating book, ably translated by Prof. E. B. Krehbiel.)

H. O. Taylor: The Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages. Third edition. Macmillan, 1911.

—— The Mediæval Mind. 2 vols. 8°. Third edition. Macmillan, 1919. (A book of unusual breadth, insight, and charm, although somewhat puzzling in method and purpose.)

H. Adams: Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres. 8°. Houghton Mifflin.

APPENDIX

EXPANSION OF THE ROYAL DOMAIN DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

Cf. Franz Schrader : *Atlas de Géographie Historique.* Hachette, Paris.

Cartes 21 : La Région Française à la Fin du Xème Siècle.
22 : La France Féodale.
25 : Conquête de la France par les Rois Capetiens.
28 : Domaine de la Guerre de Cent Ans.

All by Aug. Longnon.

These maps and the scholarly notices which accompany them will give an excellent idea of the extraordinary complication of mediæval geography. The present table is reduced to the simplest facts. It should be borne in mind that the Royal Domain was constantly losing as well as gaining, through the granting of apanages or the adverse fortune of war.

987	Hugh Capet	Domain : Duchy of France—Paris, Orleans, Etampes, Dreux, Montreuil-sur-mer. Abbot of Saint Martin of Tours and Saint Denys.
1055	Henry I	County of Sens.
1069	Philip I	County of Gâtinais.
1076		County of Vexin.
1100		Viscounty of Bourges (purchase).
1118	Louis VI	Montlhéry (on the high-road from Paris to Orleans).
1120		Sundry Castles purchased.
1122		Corbeil.
1137	Louis VII	Marriage with Alienor of Guienne. Loses her domains 1152.
1184	Philip-Augustus-Montargis.	
1185		Amiens, Montdidier, Roye, Choisy, Tourotte.
1191		Artois.
1195–1200		Sundry Acquisitions in Normandy (conquest and treaty).
1203		Normandy, Anjou, etc. (confiscation of the French domains of John Lackland).
1211–13		Auvergne.
1226	Louis VIII	Perche. Extension of influence in South-Albigensian Crusade.
1229	Louis IX	Viscounty of Nîmes (Albigensian Crusade).
1285–1314	Philip IV	Champagne (by marriage). Marche and Angoulême (confiscation) ; Fluctuating Arrangements with England and Flanders.
1343	Philip VI	Dauphiné (nominally not until 1364, under Charles V). Wild Fluctuations during Hundred Years' War.
1477	Louis XI	Duchy of Burgundy, Cities of the Somme, etc. (heritage of Duke Charles the Bold).

INDEX

A

ABÉLARD, 164, 188, 190, *198–199*, 206, 207
Abyssinia, 217
Acheulean, 62, 63
Achilles, 231
Adam de la Halle, 274, 275
Adam the Premonstrant, 189
Adam of Saint-Victor, 188
Adam, Mystery of, 194
Adams, Henry, 306
Adour, 36, 37
Ædui, 75, 80, 82, 86
Ægidius, 119
Æsop, 276, 277
Aetius, 93, 117, 119
Africa, 56, 61, 63, 85
Agen, 43
Agincourt, 142, 286
Aignan, St., 107
Aigues-Mortes, 270
Ailli, Pierre d', 201
Aix-la-Chapelle, 124, 130
Ajaccio, 39
Alamans, 91, 92, 111, 116, 119
Alan of Lille, 159, 188, 206
Alans, 116, 118
Alaric, 92, 107, 109, 118
Alaric, 11, 110, 118
Albertus Magnus, 206, 208
Albi, 153, 183
ALBIGENSES, -IANS, 138, *152–153*, 234
Alcuin, 130
Alemannia, 123
Alesia, 83
Alexander, 124; *Romance of*, 231
Alexander II, 198
Alexander of Hales, 206, 207
Alexandria, -an, 76, 307
Alexis, Life of Saint, 191, 192
Alfred, 205
Algeria, 41, 53, 217
Alienor of Aquitaine *or* Guienne, 138, 232, 235, 285
Aliscamps, 229, 232
Allemagne, De l', 128
Alpine, 56, 65, 68, 72
ALPS, 29, 30, 31, 32, *37–38*, 39, 41, 69, 91, 143
ALSACE, 39, *47–48*, 50, 56, 119, 190
Alsace-Lorraine, 30
Alsatians, 53
"ambacti" 75, 217
America, 26, 36, 37, 38, 59, 202, 297
Amiens, 45, 61, 156, 183, 185, 253
Anastasius, 120
Andalusia, 207
Andelot, 211
Andorra, 37
Angers, 197, 202, 222, 244, 253, 271
Anglo-Saxon, 97, 117, 205, 297
Anglo-Norman, 136, 222
Angoulême, 44
Anjou, 163, 244
Annecy, 38
Anselm, St., 198, 206
Anselm of Laon, 198
Anthony, 112, 156
Anticlaudianus, 188
Antoine de la Salle, 240
Antonines, 91
"antrustiones," 217
Antwerp, 49
Aosta, 52
Apollo, 77, 105
Apollonius of Tyana, 103
Appalachian, 39
Aquinas, cf. Thomas, St.
AQUITAINE, -IA, -IAN, 32, *42–43*, 44, 56, 69, 72, 75, 83, 87, 117, 120, 122, 127, 234, 235, 296
ARABS, 110, 120, 122, 176, 207, 259, 276
Arbogast, 109
Arcachon, 44
Archdeacon, 58
Ardennes, 31, 77
Arduena, Dea, 77
Argonne, 44
ARIANISM, *110*, 118
Ariovistus, 74, 82, 83, 116
ARISTOTLE, 203, 206, *207*, 299, 307

Arius, 110
Arles, 41, 87, 106, 180, 256
Armagnac, 141, 142, 219, 268
ARMORICA, 31, 32, 34, 44, 80, 83, 88, 117, 119
Arnold, Matthew, 28
Arnulf, 122
Arras, 142, 271, 273, 274
Art Religieux en France au XIIIème Siècle, 184, 189
Art Religieux en France à la Fin du Moyen Age, 189
Artagnan, d', 43
ARTHUR, -IAN, 233, *235–240*
Arverni, -ian, 75, 76, 77, 80, 87
Aryan, 55
Assisi, cf. Francis, St.
Asturias, 123
Ataulf, 118
Athalie, 196
Athenians, 71
Atlantic, 27, 29, 30, 33, 35, 36, 42, 43, 74
Attalus, 109
Attila, 116, 117, 119
Auberée, 276
Aucassin et Nicolette, 240
Auch, 106
Aude, 42
Audigier, 229
Augustine, St., 108, 109, 113, 204
Augustinians, 163
Augustus, 25, 87, 89, 91, 151
Aurelianus, 92
Aurignac, -ian, 64, 65
Auscii, 106
Ausonius, 88, 89, 105
Australia, 29, 57
AUSTRASIA, 32, 120, 121, 122, 127, 143, 244
Austria, 67, 72, 98
Austro-Hungary, 30
Autun, 40, 88, 92
AUVERGNE, -ATS, *35–36*, 46, 56, 73, 107, 112, 180, 285
Avaricum, 79, 83
Avars, 123
Averroes, 207
Avicenna, 207
Avignon, 41, 168, 244, 260, 270, 283, 288
Avitus, 130
Aymon, Quatre Fils, 228

B

Babylon, 263; Captivity of, 168, 302
Bacon, Roger, 203, 205, 206, 208
"Bagaudæ," 92
Bagdad, 123, 259
Baltic, 74, 165
Balzac, 127, 272, 279
Bang, Dr. Martin, 73
Barbarossa, 175
"Barbary," 263
Barcelona, 37, 136, 259
Barèges, 37
Barlaam et Joasaph, 192
Bari, 157
Bar-sur-Aube, 262, 263
Bartholdi, 39
Bartholomew, St., 155, 264
Basel, 168
Basoche, 274
BASQUES, 37, 53, 55, 56, 68, 69, 88, 117, 123, 226
Bassigny, 265
Bastarnæ, 72
Bastide, 258
Batavian, 84
Battle Loquifer, 229
Baudelaire, Ch., 185, 188, 189
Baux, 256
Bavaria, 65, 123
Bayard, 221
Bayeux, 271
Bayonne, 37
Béarn, 37, 50
Beaucaire, 262
Beauce, 45, 183
Beaujeu, Anne de, 296
Beaumanoir, 292
Beaumont-en-Argonne, 252, 255, 257
Beaune, 40
Beauvais, 45, 181, 251, 260, 292
Beauvoisis, 50, 292
Bec, Abbey of, 198, 205
Becket, Thomas, 156, 192
Bédier, J., 20, 157, 237
Belen, -us, 77, 105
Belfort, 39
Belgæ, 72, 75
Belgium, -ian, 31, 48, 49, 52, 53, 83, 190
BENEDICT OF NURSIA, ST., 112, 113, 163
BENEDICTINES, 58, *112*, *113*, 164, 180, 197, 199
Bénezet, 260
Benoit of Sainte-Maure, 231
Béranger, 20, 212
Berbers, 56, 63
Berengar, 205
Bergerac, Cyrano de, 43
Bergson, H., 58
Bernard of Chartres, 206

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, ST., 40, 151, 156, 159, *164*, 165, 175, 188, 190, 199, 206, 265
Beroul, 237
Berry, 80; Dukes of, 144, 244
Berserker, 225
Bertha, 172
Bertrade, 161
Besançon, 39
BESTIARIES, 204
Bethany, 104
Bethlehem, 195
Beyrouth, 53
Béziers, 42, 153, 254
Biarritz, 37
Bibracte, 79
Bismarck, 20, 99, 281
BLACK DEATH, 141, 249, 268
Black Prince, 44
Blanche of Castile, 139, 154, 232
Blanche of Navarre, 232, 235
Blandina, 104
Blaye, 234
Bloch, G., 68
Blois, 45
Bodel, 194
Boethius, 203, 205
Bohemia, 31, 74, 152
Boii, 74
Boileau, Etienne, 149, 265, 267
Boileau, N., 58, 105
Bologna, 202, 292
Bonaparte, 39, 97
Bonaventura, 166, 206, 208
BONIFACE VIII, 167, 177, 294, 302
Book of Crafts, 149, 265
BORDEAUX, 43, 77, 89, 136, 161, 180, 253
Born, Bertran, 234
Boron, Robert, 239
Bossuet, 24, 40
Boston, 180
Boucher de Perthes, 61
"Bougre" (Bulgar), 152
BOUILLON, GODFREY OF, 138, 174, *175*, 221
Boulainvilliers, 126, 217
Boulogne, 49
Bourboule, 35
Bourges, 45, 46, 142, 263, 272, 281, 284
Bourget, Lake, 38
Bouvines, 138, 256
Brazza, 58
Brendan, 192
Brest, 34
Brétigny, 141
BRETON, *34–35*, 53, 56, 73, 123, 136
BRETON, LAYS AND ROMANCES, *235–240*, 275, 276
Breviarum Alarici, 118
Briare, 46
Bridges, Robert, 299
Brief Tract on Latter-Day Perils, 201
Britain, 74, 79, 83, 88, 91, 104
British, 56, 97
British Isles, 69, 123
Britons, 117, 119
BRITTANY, 31, *33–35*, 36, 42, 46, 50, 56, 66, 72, 105, 117, 136, 140, 155, 162, 235
Broglie, 106
BRONZE AGES, 56, 67, 72
Brou, 184
Brotherhoods, 264, 265
Brownell, 58
Bruges, 273
BRUNEHAUT, BRUNHILD, *120–121*
Brunetto Latini, 139
Bruno, St., 158, 163
Brussels, 273
Brut, 236
Bryce, 124
Buckle, 23
Bucarest, 53
BUDDHA, 23; BUDDHISM, 192
Buffon, 40
Bulgarian, 152, 174
Burgos, 183
BURGUNDIANS, 40, 110, 117, 118, 127, 141, 142, 164, 180, 201, 219, 269
BURGUNDY, 26, 32, 33, *41*, 46, 56, 111, 120, 121, 122, 126, 136, 141, 142, 143, 144, 163, 215, 244, 286, 296, 298
Butler, E. C., 113
BYZANTINE, 71, 122, 179, 235, 240, 259, 270

C

CABOCHE, -IENS, 201, 268, 296, 298
CÆSAR, 23, 36, 42, 69, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 83, 84, 116, 120, 124, 280
—, *Life of Julius*, 23
Caen, 45, 180
Cahors, 261
Caillaux, 59
Calais, 49, 140, 143
Calvin, J., 31, 38, 58, 90, 98
CALVINISM, 153
Camargue, 41
Cambrai, 49

Cambridge, 200
Cambridge Mediæval History, 113, 130
Canaries, 263
Cannebière, 42
Canossa, 150
Canterbury, 198
Capet, Hugh, cf. Hugh.
CAPETIANS, 31, 40, 45, 135, *136–144*, 146, 147, 155, 161, 162, 164, 167, 171, 182, 220, 245, 255, *280–301*
Capitouls, 254
Caracalla, 86
Carcassonne, 279
Carloman, 122
Carnac, 66
Carnutes, 78
CAROLINGIANS, 111, *121–126*, 129, 135, 179, 188, 205, 226, 246, 280, 284, 285
Carthage, 70
CARTHUSIANS, 163, 307
Cassiteridæ, 67
Castillon, 142
Catalaunian Fields, 116
Catalonia, 37, 53, 259
CATHARS, *152–153*
Causses, 35
Cauterets, 37
CELTIBERIAN, 69, 91
CELT, -IC, 34, 35, 48, 53, 54, 65, 66, 68, 69, *71–81*, 82, 83, 90, 100, 105, 131, 154, 192, 202, 234, *235–240*
CELTO-SLAVIC, 56, 57, 68, 72
CENTRAL MOUNTAINS, cf. MASSIF CENTRAL.
Cerealis, 84
Cernunnos, 77
Cette, 42
CÉVENNES, 32, 45, 41
Cévenole, 56, 72
Châblis, 40
Chambord, 45
Chamberlain, H. S., 23, 25, 57, 73, 129
Chamounix, 38
CHAMPAGNE, 22, 45, 215, 224, 232, 235, 251, 262
Champeaux, Guillaume de, 163, 198, 206
Champion, E., 115
Channel, 29, 31, 33, 83, 236
CHANSON DE GESTE, *225–231*, 275, 299
Charente, 44
CHARLEMAGNE, 29, 37, 112, 117, 120, *122–125*, 126, 135, 144, 161, 174, 187, 209, 217, *226–231*, 279, 282, 284
Charlemagne's Pilgrimage, 229, 241, 275
CHARLES MARTEL, 44, 111, 121, 122, 212, 219
Charles the Bald, 125, 130, 205, 209, 285
Charles the Fat, 126
Charles the Simple, 126
CHARLES V THE WISE, *141*, 281, 294, 297, *298–299*
Charles V, Emperor, 300
Charles the Bad, K. of Navarre, 141
Charles VI, 141, 281, 296
CHARLES VII, 45, *142*, 143, 263, 269, 281, 288, 294, 296, 297, 299, 301
Charles the Bold of Burgundy, 32, 143, 286, 300
Charles VIII, 143, 296
Charles X, 283
CHARTIER, A., 241, 275, 299, 300
Chartres, 45, 78, 155, 157, 162, 182, 183, 197
Chateaubriand, 20, 35, 105, 160, 304
Chateauneuf, 254
Châtelet, 260
Chelles-sur-Marne, Chellean, 62
Chenonceaux, 45
Cherbourg, 45
Chevalerie, 20
Childeric, 117, 119
Childeric III, 122
Chilperic, 121
China, 35, 96
Chloter I, 120
CHRÉTIEN OF TROYES, 238–239, 241
Christine de Pisan, cf. Pisan.
Christopher, St., 155
Cicero, 90, 203, 307
Cimbri, 72, 82, 116
CISALPINE GAUL, 82
CISTERCIAN, CITEAUX, 162–164
Civilis, 84
CLAIRVAUX, 40, 164, 193 (cf. BERNARD, ST.)
Classicus, 84
Claudius, 84, 85
Clemenceau, 34, 59
Clermont-Ferrand, 36, 101, 174
Clopinel, J., cf. Meun.
Clotilda, 111, 119
CLOVIS, 44, 92, *110–111*, 117, *119–120*, 122, 127, 282

CLUNY, *162*, *164*, 166, 173, 180, 197, 199, 272
Cœur, Jacques, 263, 272, 281
Cognac, 44
Cologne, 84, 183
"coloni," 94, 95
Colorado, 35
Columbanus, 112, 121
"comitatus," 217
COMMENDATION (ECCL.), 171
COMMENDATION (ROMAN AND FEUDAL), 216
COMMINES, 148, 242, *300–301*
Commune, 1871, 47
COMMUNES, 253–258, 287
COMPAGNONNAGE, 269
Compiègne, 142
Comte, Auguste, 189, 309
Conon of Béthune, 235
"consolamentum," 153
Constantine, 92, 96, 104, 282
CONSTANTINOPLE, 53, 147, 156, 167, 174, 175, 180, 207, 218, 225, 229, 242, 254, 259, 303
Constantius Chlorus, 88, 104
Corneille, 192
Cornwall, Cornish, 67, 71, 237
Corsica, 37, 38–39, 50, 53
Coucy, castle, 222
Coucy, Enguerrand of, 248
COURT OF LOVE, 255
Courtrai, 49
CRAFTS, 265; *BOOK OF*, 265
Crassus, Licinius, 83
Crassus, P., 83
Cressy, 140, 286, 288
Creusot, Le, 40
CRÔ-MAGNON, 54, 56, 61, *63–64*, 65
CRUSADES, 157, 164, 172, *174–177*, 188, 207, 219, 221, 234, 254
Curel, de, 216
CURIA (GALLO-ROMAN), 86
Curia (eccl.), 177
CURIA REGIS, 290–293
"curiales," 95
Cuvelier, 299
Cybele, 101
Cyprus, 263

D

Dagobert, 121, 130
Damascus, 175, 259
Danes, Danish, 53, 123
Daniel, 194
Dante, 192
Danube, 37, 74, 174, 176
DARK AGES, *129–131*, 188, 253, 259, 302
Dauphiny, 38, 285
Dea Syra, 101
Défense de la Poésie Française, 28
Delphos, 74
Denain, 49
Denfert-Rochereau, 39
Denmark, 65, 232
Denys, St., 104, 155, 184; cf. Saint-Denys, Abbey of.
Descartes, 90, 304
Deschamps, Eustache, 241, 299
DEVIL, 157–158
Diana, 77
Dieppe, 45, 263
Dijon, 40, 180, 244
Dimier, L., 304
Dinant, 46
Diocletian, 92, 104
Dionysos, 101
Discours de la Méthode, 90
Dispater, 77
Diviciacus, 79
Divona, 79
Dombes, 40
DOMINIC, ST., 154, *165–166*, 192
DOMINICANS, 165, 166, 167, 190; cf. Friars.
Donatus, 203
Donon, 77
Dordogne, 32, 43, 44, 56, 61, 62, 63
Douai, 49
Downside Abbey, 113
DRUIDICAL STONES, 66
DRUIDS, 76, 78, 105
Dubarry, Mme., 58
Du Guesclin, 141, 288, 299
Dunkirk, 29, 49
Duns Scotus, 206, 208, 302
Durance, 119
Durandal, 227
Dutch, 52

E

Ebroin, 120
Edessa, 191
Edward III, 140
Eginhard, 130
Egypt, 101, 129, 175, 176, 195, 250
Egyptians, 56, 67, 109
Elbe, 74
Elbeuf, 45
Eleusis, 101
Eliduc, 236
Eligius, Eloi, St., 130
El Paso, Texas, 51
Emerton, 302

"endura," 153
Eneas, Romance of, 231
Enfants Sans Souci, 274
ENGLAND, 26, 27, 45, 57, 59, 98, 131, 137–143, 172, 200, 214, 218, 219, 235, 255, 258, 259, 278, 284, 286, 297, 305
English Literature, History of, 22
Eoanthropus, 62
EOLITHIC, 62
EPIC, FEUDAL, 225–229
Epopées Françaises, 230
Esperandieu, 71
Esperanto, 90
Essai sur l'Inégalité des Races Humaines, 129
Essen, 40
Esus, 77
Etruria, 74
Etruscans, 68, 69, 70
Eudes (Odo), 126
Eugénie, Empress, 37
Eugenius, 109
Eulalia, Cantilene of St., 191
Eumenius, 40, 88, 89
Euric, 118
Euskara, Euskarian, 69
Euthymenes, 71
EXCOMMUNICATION, 78, 172

F

FABLIAUX, 274, 275–276
"Fainéant," 121
Fallières, 31
Faust, 158
Fauvel, 277
Favorinus, 71
Fécamp, 197
Fère-en-Tardenois, 64
FEUDALISM, 209–224
FLAGELLANTS, 159
FLAMBOYANT, GOTHIC, 184
Flamenca, 240
FLANDERS, 46, *49*, 56, 57, 136, 138, 140, 141, 253, 262, 273, 295
Flavianus, 109
Flemings, 52
Flemish, 49
Florence, 258
Florus, 84
Fontevrault, 163
Foolish Virgins, 194
Formigny, 142
Fort, Paul, 299
Fouillée, A., 58
Foulques, 190
Foundations of the Nineteenth Century, 23, 25
Fourier, 58
Fourvières, 41
France, A., 52, 58, 115
France (La) au Point de Vue Moral, 58
France (The) of To-Day and her Religious Evolution, 28
FRANCIA OCCIDENTALIS, 125, 126, 135, 285
FRANCIS OF ASSISI, ST., 151, 159, *165–166*, 192
Francis I, 147, 298
FRANCISCANS, *165–167*, 190, 203, 207, 208
Francke, Kuno, 21
Francian Dialect, 53
Franche-Comté, 39, 239
Franconia, 123
FRANKS, 30, 43, 44, 53, 54, 61, 75, 91, 110, *116*, *131*, 135, 209, 217, 219, 225, 232, 253, 259, 284, 285, 301
Fredegar, Pseudo-, 120, 130
Fredegund, 121
Frederick II, Emperor, 175, 176
Frederick II the Great, 27
FREEMASONRY, 269
French Traits, 58
FRIARS, *165–167*; PREACHING, *190–191*
FRIARS AND UNIVERSITIES, 200–201, 207
FROISSART, 144, 146, 241, *242*, 300
Fulbert, 162, 188, 197
Furfooz, 65
Fustel de Coulanges, 128

G

Gaelic, 72
Galahad, 221, 239
Galatai, 72
Galatia, 74
Galerius, 104
Gallia Bracchata, 82
GALLICANISM, 98, 168–169, 283, 284
Gallieni, 58
Galicia, 157
Galon, 156
Gambetta, 58
Gard, 87
Garibaldi, 38
Garnier of Pont Ste-Maxence, 192
GARONNE, 30, 32, 36, 42, 43, 44, 69, 73, 82
GASCONY, 36, 43, 50, 69, 117, 136, 162

Gâtinais, 50
Gaudri, 177
GAUL, 30, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 53, 54
—, Prehistoric, 60–68
—, Celtic, 69–81
—, Roman, 82–99
—, Christianity in, 100–115
Gautier of Coincy, 192, 193
Gautier, Léon, 20, 223, 224, 225, 227, 230, 233
Gavarnie, 36
Gawain, 239
Gayant, M. and Mme., 273
Geneva, 38
Génie du Christianisme, 20
Genoa, 37, 156, 259, 288
Genseric, 92
Gentioux, 35
Geoffrey of Monmouth, 236
GEOFFREY OF VILLEHARDOUIN, 225
George, St., 105, 155, 157, 184
Gerbert, 197, 206
Gergovia, 83
GERMANY, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 39, 48, 52, 53, 56, 57, 59, 68, 72, 74, 76, 83, 98, 114, 120, 121, 124, 125, 129, 137, 143, 154, 200, 203, 216, 222, 256, 258, 262, 277, 279, 283
Gerson, Jehan, 190, 201, 278, 283
Ghent, 258
Gibraltar, 119
Gilbert de la Porrée, 206
Gilles de Rais, 160
Girard of Roussillon, 228
Glaber, Raoul, 138, 180, 303
Gnostic, 152
Gobineau, 129
GODFREY OF BOUILLON, 138, 174, *175*, 221
Goethe, 277
Golden Legend, 156, 157
Golgotha, 195
"Goliards," 201
GOTHIC ART, 45, 130, 139, *181–186*, 243, 272, 273, 279, 302
GOTHS, 92, 109, 127, 182
Gottschalk, 205
Gourmont, Rémi de, 188
Gracchi, 82
Grail, Holy, 174, 238, 239–240
Grande-Chartreuse, 38
Grand-Saint-Bernard, 260
Grant, Madison, 23
Great Britain, 29, 69
Gréban, Arnoul, 195
Greece, 68, 79, 101, 105
GREEKS, 42, 70, 71, 78, 80, 84, 104, 129
—, Language, 196, 203
Greenland, 166
GREGORY OF TOURS, 111, 112, 120, 130, 187
Gregory the Great, 121
GREGORY VII, 163, 167, 170, 261, 307
Grenelle, 65
Grenoble, 38
Grimaldi, 38
Grimoald, 122
Gringoire, P., 300
Gros-Caillou, 66
Guadeloupe, 53
Guibert of Nogent, 156, 188, 254
Guibourc, 233
Guienne, Guyenne, 43, 143, 138, 285; cf. Alienor.
Guifred of Cerdagne, 161, 162
GUILDS, 263–269
Guillaume of Lorris, cf. Lorris.
Guinea, 263
Guinefort, St., 156
Guinevere, 238
Guiot of Provins, 177
Guiraud, J., 304
Guizot, 216, 308
Gundebad, 110, 118
Guyenne, cf. Guienne.

H

Hadrian, 100
Hallstatt, 67, 68
Hansa, 263
Harcourt, 200
Hastings, 227
Haussmann, 270, 271
Hâvre, Le, 45
Hayti, 52
Hazebrouck, 49
Hegel, 52
Heidelberg, 61
Heine, H., 27
Hélie I, 161
Hellas, 70, 131; Hellenic, 100
HELLENISM (JULIAN'S), 96, 105
Héloïse, 188, 198–199
Helveti, 82, 83
Hendaye, 36
Henri III (France), 58
Henri IV (France and Navarre), 37, 147
Henry IV (Emperor), 150, 172
Henry Plantagenet, 138, 232
Henry V (England), 142
Henry VI (England), 142, 201

Henry VIII (England), 284
Hérault, 42
Hildebrand, 163, 167
Hindu, 112
Hincmar, 172, 205
Hiram, 269
Histoire Partiale, Histoire Vraie, 304
Hohenstaufen, 164, 307
Holy Grail, 174, 238, 239–240
HOMAGE, 212
Honorius, 109
HOSPITAL (ORDER), 164, 167, 175
Hostel St-Paul, 243
HUGH CAPET, 126, 135, 137, 281, 285
Hugo of St-Victor, 206
Hugo, Victor, 19, 20, 27, 39, 47, 58, 59, 128, 144, 183, 184, 231, 272, 300, 304
Hugon, 229
Huguenots, 44, 98
Humboldt, 69
HUNDRED YEARS' WAR (FIRST), 138–139
HUNDRED YEARS' WAR (PROPER), *140–143*, 169, 186, 197, 201, 242, 249, 263, 280, 281, 286, *295–297*
Hungarians, 117, 174
Hungary, Master of, 250
HUNS, 21, 116, 118
Huon of Bordeaux, 228
Hurepoix, 50
Hurons, 76
Huysmans, J. K., 188
Hyperboreans, 73

I

Iberian, 37, 43, 54, 69
Iceland, 34
ILE-DE-FRANCE, 47, 50, 298
Ile des Pingouins, 115
Ill, 47
Imitation of Christ, 159, 160
IMMUNITY, 210
India, 85, 129, 192, 276
Indo-China, 85
Ingeburg of Denmark, 232
INNOCENT III, 153, 154, 156, 167, 170, 172, 200, 223
INQUISITION, *154*, 292
Institution Chrétienne, 90
INTERDICT, 172
Ireland, 72, 206, 237; Irish, 72, 112
Irenæus, 104
Irminsul, 123
Isabeau of Bavaria, 142
Isidore of Seville, 205
Isis, 101, 102
ISLAM, -ISM, 122, 176
Isopet, 276
Italy, 27, 30, 37, 38, 42, 49, 52, 53, 56, 57, 72, 74, 80, 125, 131, 136, 191, 203, 253, 258, 261, 262, 263

J

JACQUES, JACQUERIE, 141, *250–251*, 296
Jacobine, 270
Jansenists, 58
Japan, 217
Jerome, St., 109
JERUSALEM, 138, 147, 157, 164, 167, 174, 175, 195, 218, 244, 259
Jesuits, 167
Jesus, 19, 23, 154, 191, 204
Jeu de la Feuillée, 274
JEWS, JEWISH, 55, 104, 161, 165, 174, 207, 224, 261, 276, 293
JOAN OF ARC, 45, 48, 58, *142*, 145, 151, 160, 201, 221, 252, 281, 296, 299, 300
John the Baptist, 157
John the Scot, cf. Scotus Erigena.
John Lackland, 138, 290
John II, the Good, 44, 140, 147, 281, 295, 296
John the Fearless (Burgundy), 141, 142
JOINVILLE, 192, *242*, 298
Joseph, St., 264
Joseph of Arimathea, 239
Judaism, 102; cf. Jews.
Judea, 131
Judgment of Renart, 277
JULIAN, EMPEROR, 46, 92, 93, 94, 96, 102, *104–105*, 116, 119
Jupiter, 78
JURA, 29, *39*; Jurassic, 44
Justin, 89
Justinian, 96, 98
Jutland, 74

K

Kant, 52
Kierzy-sur-Oise, 211
Kleber, 58
Knight in the Cart (*Launcelot of the Lake*), 238
KNIGHTHOOD, *174*, 220, *221*
Krupp, 40

L

Labiche, 36
Labienus, 83
Lælianus, 92
"læti," 84, 116
Lafontaine, 22, 279
Lafontaine and His Fables, 22
Lacordaire, 103
Lagny, 262, 263
Lamartine, 40, 73
Lamennais, 35
Lancashire, 49
Lancaster, 142
Landes, 43
Lanfranc, 198, 205, 206
Langlois, Ch. V., 20, 240, 299
LANGUEDOC, 42, 43, 120, 139, 153, 234, 254, 262, 296
Langue d'Oc, cf. Oc.
Langue d'Oil, cf. Oil.
Laodicea, 191
Laon, 45, 177, 182, 186, 248, 253, 254, 295
LAPIDARIES, 204
Lapouge, Vacher de, 55, 57, 129
La Tène, 18, 68
LATIN: COLONIES, 84, 85
—, Language, diffusion and survival, 88–90
—, Mediæval, 186–189
—, Macaronic, 190
— Quarter, 202; cf. University of Paris.
—, Influence, *96–99*
—, Miscellaneous, 48, 72, 97, 135, 203, 207, 214
Launcelot, 238, 239
Lauterburg, 29
Le Bon, Dr. G., 129
Leconte de Lisle, 22, 153
Le Coq, Robert, 295
Leckzinsky, Stanislaus, 48
Légendes Epiques, 20
Leger, St., 111, 191
LEGISTS, 292, 301
Legouis, E., 28
Leman, Lake, 41, 118
Lendit, 202, 229, 262
Leo III, 123, 124
Leo XIII, 208
Lerins, 112
Levant, 41
Liége, 48, 49, 258
LIGURIANS, 54, *69*, *70*, 73, 82
Lille, 49; cf. Alan of Lille.
Limagne, 35
Limoges, 35, 234
Limousin, 36
Linnæus, 55
Lisieux, 299
Locqmariaker, 66
LOIRE, 30, 32, 34, 45, *46*, 53, 119, 126, 127, 135, 137, 285
LOMBARDS (TRIBE), 122, 123
— (bankers), 165, 224, 261, 293
London, 141
Loretto, 157
Lorient, 34
LORRAINE, 23, 26, *48–49*, 50, 125, 136, 142, 244
Lorrainers, Epic, 228
Lorris, Charter of, 252, 255, 257
LORRIS, GUILLAUME OF, *241*, 275, 277, 278
Lothair, 125, 136
Lotharingia, 125, 143
Lothringen, 125
Loti, P., 37
Loubet, E., 31
Louis the Pious, 125
Louis the German, 125
Louis V, 126
LOUIS VI THE FAT, *137*, *138*, 209, 252, 255, 262, 281, 284, 285, 287, 288
LOUIS VII THE YOUNG, *137*, *138*, 175, 255, 282, 284, 285
Louis VIII, 139
LOUIS IX (SAINT LOUIS), 27, 58, 138, *139*, 143, 147, 151, 154, 156, 160, 168, 174, 175, 176, 183, 184, 188, 192, 208, 216, 221, 232, 242, 250, 252, 262, 265, 270, 275, 280, 281, 283, 285, 287, 288, 292, 293, 298, 302
Louis X, 149
LOUIS XI, 45, *143*, 147, 160, 269, 274, 275, 286, 288, 289, 292, 296, 298, 299, 301, 304
Louis XII, 274, 300
Louis XIV, 22, 25, 27, 32, 79, 97, 120, 139, 216, 292, 295, 304
Louisiana, 52
Louis-Philippe, 305
Lourdes, 37
Louvain, 273
Louvre, 22, 243
Luchaire, A., 150, 175, 233
Luchon, 37
Lucian, 77
Lug, 77
Lugdunensis Quarta, 106
Lupus, St., 107
Lutetia Parisiorum, 92, 104
Luther, 52, 99, 152
LYONS, *41*, 42, 49, 50, 84, 85, 87, 106, 136, 152
Lys, 49

M

Macchiavelli, 300
Macedonians, 74, 80
Machault, Guillaume, 241, 275
Mâcon, 40
Madagascar, 217
Madeleine, La, Magdalenian, 64
Maeterlinck, 193
Magdala, 104
Magna Mater, 101, 102, 138
Magyars, 218
Mahom (et), 227
Maillard, Olivier, 191
Main, 32, 120
Mâle, Emile, 184, 189
Malines, 273
Malta, 164
Manichean, 152, 157
Manorial, 216
Marbode, 188
MARCEL, ETIENNE, 141, 251, 268, 295, 296
Marcus Aurelius, 24, 94, 96, 100, 104
Margaret (Marguerite), of Scotland, 241, 300
Mariage de Figaro, 247
Maricourt, Peter of, 203
Marie of France, 236, 276
Marius, C., 82, 91, 95
Marius, Emperor of Gaul, 92
Mark, King, 237
"Marmosets," 141, 301
Marne, 46, 59
Marot, C., 278
Marseillaise, 48, 249
MARSEILLES, 30, 31, *41–42*, 49, *70*, 80, 82, 112, 175, 256, 259; cf. Massalia.
Martin, St., of Tours, 105, 109, 112, 155
Martinique, 53
MARY, VIRGIN, 104, *154–155*, *193–194*, 250
Mas d'Azil, 64
MASSALIA, MASSILIA, 82, 85, 86, 88
MASSIF CENTRAL (CENTRAL MOUNTAINS), 31, *35–36*, 37, 42, 44, 46, 72, 74
Matthew of Lorraine, 161
Maupassant, Guy de, 279
Mauriac Plain, 116
Maurice of Sully, 152, 190
Mauritius, 52
Mayor of the Palace, 121
McDonald, 58
McMahon, 58
Meaux, 251
Médecin Malgré Lui, 274
Mediæval Mind, 188
MEDITERRANEAN, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 57, 65, 69, 73, 84, 101, 254, 259, 263, 303
Médoc, 43
Melmoth, 158
Menot, Friar, 190
Mentone, 37
MERCERS, KING OF, 263
Mercury, 77
Merlin, 235, 239, 240
Merovech, Meroveus, 119, 225
MEROVINGIANS, 111, *120–121*, 124, 127, 129, 211, 217, 219, 226, 285, 294
Metchnikoff, 58
Metz, 120, 121, 183
MEUN, JEHAN OF, 241, *277*, *278*, 279
Meuse, 30, 33, 47, 48, 119, 120, 125
Mexico, 210, 217
Mézières, 48
Michel, J., 195
Michelet, 31, 33, 128, 304
Millevaches, 35
Milton, 152, 306
MIRACLES OF NOTRE-DAME, *193–194*
—, *Plays*, 159, 273, 274
"Missi Dominici," 130
Mistral, 41, 53
MITHRA, -ISM, 88, *101–102*, 105
Molière, 36, 274, 278, 279
Moloch, 78
Monaco, 38, 70
Monk Rainouart, 229
Mons, 49
Montaigne, 43, 58
Montaigu, 200
Montalembert, 106
Montbard, 40
Mont Blanc, 37, 38
Mont d'Or, 40
Mont-Dore, 35
Monte Cassino, 113
Montereau, Peter of, 183
Montesquieu, 43
Montfort, Simon of, 136, 153
Montpellier, 42, 202, 234, 259, 285
Mont-Saint-Michel, 157
Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres, 306
Moors, 276
Morocco, 210, 263
Mortillet, de, 61

Moselle, 30, 48, 70, 89
Mounet-Sully, 41
Mousterian, 62
Moustiers, le, 62
Mulhouse, 48
Mycenean, 68
MYSTERIES, *194–195*, 273, 274, 303

N

Namur, 48
Nancy, 48, 143
Nantes, 34
Naples, 274
Napolean I, 27, 32, 39, 97, 98, 120, 124, 197, 256, 287
Napolean III, 23, 71, 243
NARBONENSIS, 82, 84, 85
Narbonne, 42, 69, 234, 294
—, Narbo Martius, 82
Naurouze, 32
Navarre, 37, 136, 141, 200
NEANDERTHAL, 54, *62–63*, 64
Nebraska, 45
Nemausus, 77
NEOLITHIC, 65
NEO-PLATONISM, 105, 204
Nero, 84, 160
Netherlands, 33, 258
Neuchâtel, 39, 68
NEUSTRIA, *120*, 121, 122, 127
Newfoundland, 34
New Orleans, 52
New York, 47
Nice, 38, 53
Nicea, 104, 176
Nicholas, St., 155, 157, 184, 194
Niebelungen, 118
Nietzsche, 20, 129
Nîmes, 42, 77, 87
Nitria, 112
Nogaret, 177
Nordic, 55, 56
Noreia, Noricum, 67
NORMAN, 30, 51, 57, 117, 124, 137, 167, 180, 200, 209, 214, 218, 222, 249, 253, 284
NORMANDY, 33, *45*, *46*, 56, 126, 142, 197, 212, 219, 296
Norse, 117, 126, 155
Northmen, 125; cf. Normans.
North Sea, 29
Novempopulana, 106
Novicow, 58
Noyon, 45, 182
Nuits, 40
Numantia, 82

O

Oberammergau, 196
Oberon, 228
OC, LANGUE D', 53, 205, 292, 295
Occam, 206, 208
Odin, 131, 218
Odo, Eudes, 126
Ofnet, 65
Ogmios, 77
"Ogres," 218
OIL, LANGUE D', 191, 292, 295
Oise, 46
Oliver, 227
Olympus, 100
"oppida," 79
"opus francigenum," 45, 182
Orange, 41, 87; William of, 228
Orbieu, 228
Orderic Vital, 188
Oresme, Nicole, 299
ORLEANS, CITY, 45, 46, 107, 120, 137, 142, 197, 202, 253, 262, 285, 296
ORLEANS, DUKES OF, 141, 144, 160, 241, 242, 243, 244, 304
ORLEANS, CHARLES OF, POET, 160, *241–242*
Orontes, 95
Orosius, 107, 108
Orpheus, 115
OSTROGOTHS, 110, 120, 205
Otto IV, 138
Oxford, 122, 200

P

Pachomius, St., 112
PAGANISM, GALLO-ROMAN, 87–88
—, JULIAN'S, 104; IN CHRISTIAN LITERATURE, 105
Paimpol, 34
PALEOLITHIC, 62
Palestine, 175, 176, 214
PAPACY, *166–167*; cf. POPES.
"Parens Scientiarum," 200
PARIS, 27, 31, 35, 44, 45, 46, *47* 49, 65, 87, 104, 106, 120, 126, 137, 141, 162, 180, 183, 184, 185, 195, 197, 251, 253, 260, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 271, 272, 281, 285, 291, 293, 295, 296, 298; cf. UNIVERSITY OF PARIS.
Pâris, Gaston, 20, 225, 278, 302
PARISIAN BASIN, 32, *44–47*
PARLIAMENT, 142, *291–293*, 302
Parthians, 105

Pascal, B., 36
Passing of the Great Race, 23
Passi on Plays, *195–196*
PASTOUREAUX, 250
Pathelin, Maître Pierre, 274
Patrick, St., 192
“ patrocinium,” 216
Pau, 37
Paul, St., 85, 104, 113
PEACE OF GOD, 173, 219, 247
Pepin of Landen, 122
PEPIN THE SHORT, 120, 122
Perceval of Wales, 239
Pericles, 25
Périgord, 80, 180
Péronne, 126
Persian, 70, 101
Peter, St., 169
Peter of Pisa, 130
Peter the Venerable, 163
Peter the Hermit, 174
Peter the Great, 281
Petit Jehan de Saintré, 241, 275
Petrobrusians, 152
Peyzac, 62
Phædrus, 276, 277
Philip I, 138, 161, 172, 261
PHILIP II, AUGUSTUS, *138*, 161, 171, 175, 200, 232, 249, 252, 261, 265, 271, 280, 281, 283, 285, 286, 287, 288, 298, 305
PHILIP IV THE FAIR, *139*, *140*, 168, 177, 201, 257, 262, 268, 272, 280, 281, 287, 289, 291, 292, 293, 294, 301, 304
Philip VI, 140, 281, 285, 288
Philosophies et Théologies Médiévales, 203
Phoceans, 70
PHŒNICIANS, 67, 70
Phrygian, 101
Picard, -y, 200, 251
Picavet, 203
Picquigny, J., 295
Picts, 117
Piedmont, 152
Pierrefitte, 66
Pierrefonds, 243
Pietà, 159, 186
Piltdown, 61
PITHECANTHROPUS, 60, 61
Pisa, 259
PISAN, CHRISTINE DE, 241, 278, 299
Plantagenet, 138, 232, 285
Plessis-lès-Tours, 45, 143, 298
Pluto, 77
Po, 37, 74, 82
Podestat, 254
Poincaré, H., 57
Poissy, 260
Poitiers, 44, 111, 112, 120, 122, 141, 147
Poitou, 32, 44, 180
Poland, Poles, Polish, 49, 53, 137
Political History of Europe since 1814, 24
Polyeucte, 192, 196
Pompey, 83
POPES, 41, 122, 123, 140, *166–169*, 200, 244
POPE OF FOOLS, 159, 274
Porcellet, 256
Porphyrius, 203
Portugal, 69, 74, 218, 259, 263, 303
Port-Vendres, 36
Posidonius, 76
Postumus, 91, 92
Pothinus, 104
Prætextatus, St., 111
PRAGMATIC SANCTION, 168, 284
“ precarium,” 216
Préjugés Hostiles à l'Histoire de France, 304
Protestantism, 98
Proudhon, P. J., 153
PROVENÇAL, LANG. AND LIT., 53, 136, 234–235, 240
PROVENCE, 38, 41, 51, 56, 80, 119, 120, 244, 254, 256, 262, 292
Provins, 262, 263 ; Guiot of, 177
Prussia, 98, 308
Psychologie du Peuple Français, 58
Public Weal, League of the, 143
Punic, 82
Puy-de-Dôme, 77, 87
Puy-en-Velay, 36, 157, 180, 250
“ Puys ” (societies), 154, 194
PYRENEES, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, *36–37*, 38, 42, 43, 53, 69, 74, 88, 91, 117, 127
Pytheas, 71

Q

“ Quadrivium,” 202
QUARANTAINE-LE-ROI, 288
Quebec, 52, 181
Quest of the Absolute, 272
Quinet, Edgar, 79, 128

R

Rabelais, 36, 52, 58, 278, 279
Racine, 22, 58
Radagaisus, 93
Ramuntcho, 37
Ratcliffe, Ann, 243

Ravenna, 110, 123, 130
Ré, Isle of, 248
Reclus, O., 31
REFORMATION, 152, 196
Reinach, S., 115
Reinaert de Vos, 277
Remi (Remigius), St., 111
RENAISSANCE, 130, 131, 140, 164, 201, 206, 221, 222, 243, 273, 278, 303, 305, 306, 309
Renan, E., 25, 35, 52, 129, 155
Renart, Romance of, 275, 276, *277*, 279
Renaud of Montauban, 228
René, King, 244
Rennes, 34
REVOLUTION, 201, 247, 284, 304, 305
Reunion, 53
Reynaud, J., 79
RHEIMS, 45, 84, 88, 142, 172, 181, 182, 183, 185, 197, 205, 253, 262
RHINE, 29, 32, 41, 47, 48, 74, 77, 79, 83, 97, 116, 118, 119, 120, 125, 253, 305
Rhodes, 164
RHÔNE, 30, 32, 35, 37, *40–41*, 42, 70, 73, 82, 110, 118, 119, 125, 136
Richard II of Normandy, 249
Richard Cœur-de-Lion, 138, 175, 221
Richardson, 36, 180
Richelieu, 216, 281, 286, 300
Ripuarian Franks, 118, 119
Robert the Devil, 218
Robert the Pious, 151, 171, 282
Robert the Strong, 126, 284
Robin and Marion, 274
Roch, Saint, 155
Rochelle, La, 44, 263
Rochefort, 44
Roland, Song of, 31, 123, 151, 160, 174, 177, *226–227*, 228, 229, 231, 275
Rollo, 126, 210
ROMAN, 40, 41, 43, 53, 54, 61, 129, 130, 222, 253, 261, 263, 292, 297, 301
ROMANCE (LANGUAGE), 72, 179, 190, 225
ROMANCE OF CHIVALRY, 231, 232–244
Romand Swiss, 52
ROMANESQUE ART, 36, *179–180*
Romanists, 216
ROME, 30, 68, 70, 73, 74, 77, 79, 80, 81, 116, 117, 118, 119, 131, 157, 177, 187, 191, 205, 260, 282, 283, 284, 291, 306, 307
Romulus Augustulus, 92
Roquefort, 35
Roscellin, 206, 207
Rose, Romance of the, 1st Part, *241*, 275; 2nd Part, *277–279*
Rosmerta, 77
Rou, 249
Roubaix, 49, 50
Rouen, 45, 46, 50, 142, 183, 184, 255, 262, 271, 291
Round Table, 236, 238
Rousseau, J. J., 38, 71, 149, 278
Roussillon, 37, 53, 70
Royat, 35
Rubens, 49
Rudel, Geoffrey, 234
Russia, 30, 56, 72
RUTEBEUF, 194, 275
Rutilius Namatianus, 89, 108

S

Saar, 30
Sabatier, P., 28
Sabinus, 84
Sacrovir, 79, 84
Saint-Acheul, 61, 62
Saint-Aignan, 305
Saint-Amour, Wm. of, 201
Saint-Bénigne, Dijon, 180, 197
Saint-Cécile, Albi, 183
Saint-Claude, Abbey and City, 39, 247
SAINT-DENYS, ABBEY AND CITY, 137, 156, 157, 164, 170, 181, 182, 199, 202, 215, 229, 230, 262, 282
Sainte-Chapelle, Paris, 156, 183
Sainte-Croix, 180
Saintes, 139
Saint-Etienne, city, 35
Saint-Etienne (Stephen), Caen, 180
Saint-Eustache, Paris, 184
Saint-Front, Perigueux, 180
Saint-Gall, Monk of, 130
Saint-Galmier, 35
Saint-Genevieve, 157, 198
Saint-Germain-des-Prés, 180, 198
SAINT-JOHN, KNIGHTS OF (HOSPITAL), 164, 167, 175
Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre, Paris, 272
Saint Maclou, Rouen, 184
Saint-Mark's, Venice, 180
Saint-Martin of Tours, Abbey, 254, 282
Saint-Maur, 164, 195
Saint-Michael, 105
Saint-Michael's Mount, Mont-Saint-Michel, 157

Saint-Nazaire, 34
Saint-Nicholas, drama, 194
Saint-Omer, 253
Saint-Ouen, Rouen, 184, 198
Saint-Peter's, Rome, 185
Saint-Remy, Rheims, 182
Saint-Sernin, Toulouse, 180
Saint-Simon, H., 58
Saint-Stephen's (Etienne), Caen, 180
Saint-Sulpice, Paris, 186
Saint-Trophime, Arles, 180
Saint-Victor, Abbey, 163
Saint-Vital, Ravenna, 130
Saint-Wandrille, Abbey, 198
SALIAN FRANKS, 119, 120
SALIC LAW, 127, 140
Salies-de-Béarn, 37
Salisbury, John of, 206
Salonika, 53
Salvianus, 107
Sambre, 49
Santiago de Compostella, 157
SAÔNE, 32, *40*, 41, 42, 110, 118, 119, 125
SARACENS, 43, 44, 112, 117, 179, 180, 212, 218, 226, 228, 229
Sauve, Sauveté, Sauveterre, 258
Savona, 37
Savoy, 56, 65
SAXON, SAXONY, 35, 49, 116, 122, 123, 124
Scandinavia, -n, 30, 45, 56
Scheldt, 30, 47, 49, 136
Scherer, 58
SCHISM, GREAT, 168, 201, 283, 284, 303
Schneider, 40
SCHOLASTICISM, *205–208*
Sciarra Colonna, 177
Scilly Islands, 67
Scot, John the, Scotus Erigena, 130, 158, 205
Scotland, 69, 72; Scots, 117; Scottish, 289
Scott, Sir Walter, 144
Scythian, 73, 74
Sedan, 19, 48
Seeck, 95
Seignobos, Ch., 20, 24, 223
Sein, Island, 78
SEINE, 30, 32, 41, 44, *45–46*, 53, 70, 87, 125, 135, 137, 267, 285
Seneca, 96
Senlis, 182
Senones, Sens, 106, 182, 199, 272
Septimania, 120
Sequana, Dea, 77
Sequani, 75, 80, 82
Serapis, 77, 101
SERFS, *245–252*
Shakespeare, 23
Sic et Non, 199
Sicilly, 137, 167, 176, 206, 218,
Sidonius Apollinaris, 105, 107, 109, 111
Sieyès, 126, 217
Sigebert, 120
Sirona, 77
Sister Beatrice, 193
Slavs, 123
Sluter, Claus, 244
Social Forces in German Literature, 21
Société Française au Moyen Age d'après dix Romans d'Aventure, 240
Soissons, 119, 121
Sol Invictus, 101, 102
Sologne, 45
Solomon, 269
Solutré, 64
Somme, 61, 119
Sorbon, Robert of, 200
Sorbonne, 200, 201
Sots, Soties, 274
Souhait Insensé, 276
SPAIN, 27, 30, 36, 43, 69, 74, 82, 91, 104, 110, 118, 123, 154, 176, 195, 226, 288, 303
Speculum Majus, 188, 189
Spencer, H., 189
Staël, Mme. de, 128
STATES GENERAL, 140, 141, *294–298*, 302
Stephen of Cloyes, 175
Stilicho, 93
Stoicism, 105
Strabo, 31, 59
Strasbourg, 48, 119, 183; Oath of, 125
Strowski, F., 58
Stuarts, 283
Sueves, 116, 117, 118
SUGER, ABBOT, 137, 182, 188, 282, 285, 307
Sulla, 95
Sully, Maurice of, 162, 190
Sweden, 98
SWISS, SWITZERLAND, 37, 38, 39, 41, 50, 52, 53, 65, 68, 72, 143, 289
Syagrius, 119
Sylvester II, 197
Symmachus, 100, 109
Syria, -n, 71, 101, 175, 259, 276

T

Tacitus, 76, 95
Taillebourg, 139
Taillefer, 227, 230
Taine, H., 22, 37, 210, 218
Taranis, 78
Tarn, 35
Tartuffe, 278
“Taurobolium,” 101
Taylor, H. O., 188
TEMPLARS, 140, *164*, 165, 167, 175, 221, *261–262*, 293, 294, 307
TÈNE, LA, 68
Teodulf, 130
Tertullian, 109
Tertry or Testry, 121, 122
Tetricus, 92
Teutates, 77, 78, 79
Teutones, 72, 82, 116
TEUTONS, TEUTONIC, TEUTONISM, 25, 48, 54, 55, 57, 72, 73, 74, 98; INVASIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE, *126–131*, 225, 226, 234, 240, 263, 306; KNIGHTS, 165
Thebes, Romance of, 231
Thélème, Abbey of, 58
Theodoric, 110, 120, 205
Theodosius, 92, 96, 282
Theophilus, 158, 194
Thibaut of Champagne, 235
Thierry, Augustin, 254, 304
Thiers, A., 31
Thomas, poet, 237
THOMAS, ST., AQUINAS, 147, 166, 189, 206, *208*, 302, 304, 309
Thompson, 58
Thor, 78, 121
Thuringians, 119
Thurn and Taxis, 217
Tiber, 95
Tocqueville, 106
Tolbiacum, 119
Tolosa, 82
Torquemada, 154
Toul, 161, 184
TOULOUSE, 43, 82, 111, 118, 139, 154, 180, 228, 234, 262, 298
Touraine, 45
Tourcoing, 49
Tournai, 49
TOURNAMENTS, TOURNEYS, 222
TOURS, 44, 45, 46, 105, 111, 112, 120, 122, 148, 184, 205, 254; cf. Martin, and Gregory.
Toxandria, 119
Trajan, 91
Tréguier, 34
Trêves (Trier), 46, 84, 92
Trinil, Java, 61
Trinity Church, Boston, 180
Tristan of Leonois, 235, 236, *237*
“Trivium,” 202
Trogus Pompeius, 89
Troy, Romance of, 231
Troyes, 107, 142, 262, 291
TRUCE OF GOD, 173, 219, 247
Tungdal, 192
Tunis, 53, 139
Turgot, 304
Turks, 143, 147, 174, 175, 176
Turpin, 177
Tutor, 84
Tyana, Apollonius of, 103
Tylor, 18
Tyre, 70

U

UNIVERSALS, 206–207
UNIVERSITY OF PARIS, 139, 142, 147, 168, 171, 175, 190, *198–203*, *206–207*, 266, 272, 278, 283, 293, 302
Untergang der Antiken Welt, 95
URBAN II, 167, 172, 174, 190

V

Valdez, cf. Waldo, 152
Valence, 41
Valenciennes, 49
Valentinian, 107
VALOIS, KINGS, 45, 140; PROVINCE, 50
Vals, 35
VANDALS, 92, 116, 117, 118
Vanoise, 38
Vascon, 69
Vaux, Peter of, cf. Waldo, 152
Vendée, 34
Venice, 180, 259
Ventadour, 234
Ventoux, 77
VERCINGETORIX, 71, 75, 76, 83
Vergil, 90
Verden, 123
Verdun, city, 48; treaty, 125
Versailles, 243, 306
Vespasian, 84
Veuillot, L., 109
Vézelay, 180
Vexin, 50
Vichy, 35
Victorinus, 92
Vidal de la Blache, 33, 50

Vienna, 37
Vienne, river, 111
Vienne, city, 41, 82, 87, 106
Vigny, A. de, 189
Villedaigne, 228, 229
Villefranche, 258
VILLEHARDOUIN, *225*, 242
Villeneuve, 258
VILLON, F., 144, 148, 160, 202, 275
Vincennes, 139, 222, 293
Vincent of Beauvais, 188, 189
Viollet-le-Duc, 183, 243, 270, 272
VISIGOTHS, 43, 110, 116, 117, *118*, 119, 120
Vitikind, 123
Voir Dit, 241
Voltaire, 23, 52, 58, 99, 115, 192, 278
Voragine, J., 156
Vosegus, 77
VOSGES, *39*, 47, 48, 77
Vouillé, Vouglé, 44, 120
Voyage aux Pyrénées, 37
Vue Générale de l'Histoire de France, 115

W

Wace, 236, 249
Wagner, R., 20, 237
WALDO, VALDEZ, VAUX, WALDENSIANS, *152*
Wales, 31, 72
Wallia, 118
Walloon, 52
Walter the Penniless, 174
Watteau, 49
Welsh, 69, 72, 235
West Indies, 52
Westminster, 183
WHITE HOODS, 250
Wilde, Oscar, 160
William IX of Aquitaine, 234
William the Conqueror, 138, 172
William of Dijon, 197
William II, Hohenzollern, 24, 306
William the Marshal, 222
William of Orange or Toulouse, 228–229, 232
William, cf. Champeaux, Lorris, Machault, Meun.
Wise Men, 194
Wolff, Albert, 52
Worms, 118

Y

Yonne, 46
Ypres, 49, 273
Yves, Saint, 155
Yvetot, 212

Z

Zenodorus, 87
Zeus, 131
Zola, 58
Zyromski, 58

THE AMERICAN PRESS LIBRARY

Printed in Great Britain by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld.,
London and Aylesbury.

DATE DUE

THE KING'S LIBRARY
3000062444